



H. P. Hall, sc.

LOUIS XIV

THE ENGRAVING OF LOUIS XIV BY H. P. HALL

THE LIFE
OF
JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH

WITH
SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND OF
THE WAR OF THE SUCCESSION.

BY
ARCHIBALD ALISON, LL.D.

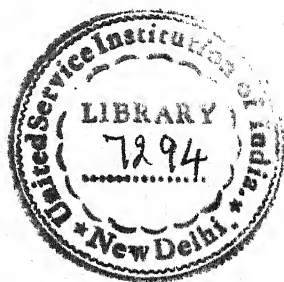
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L I F E

O F

M A R L B O R O U G H

CHAPTER VII.

PROGRESS OF THE WAR IN OTHER QUARTERS IN 1708.—CONFERENCE OF
THE HAGUE.—SIEGE OF TOURNAY.—BATTLE OF MALPLAQUET.—
FALL OF MONS.

ALTHOUGH the campaign in Flanders was the principal one in 1708, and from its vast importance and thrilling interest absorbed the greater part of the forces of the contending parties, and nearly the whole interest of the struggle, yet it was by no means the only theatre of important operations. In other quarters considerable successes had been gained, which contributed to enhance the difficulties, and augment the dangers of the French monarch. In the Mediterranean, Admiral Drake had conquered Sardinia, almost without striking a blow. Minorca, with its noble harbour and powerful fortress of Port Mahon, had yielded to a combined naval and military force under the able direction of General Stanhope, and, with Gibraltar, promised to secure to the English the command of that inland sea. On the

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I.

Progress of
the war in
the Medi-
terranean
and on the
Rhine.

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¹ Hist. Mil.
viii. 225-
272. Hist.
de Marl.
iii. 1, 2.

2.
Ruinous
divisions
which pre-
vailed in
Spain.

Upper Rhine, the Electors of Bavaria and Hanover, at the head of their respective armies, had cautiously abstained from serious hostilities, and spent the campaign in mutual observation, without achieving anything worthy of being recorded. Everything had been drawn to the campaign in Flanders: nothing had occurred elsewhere to counterbalance its advantages.¹

The war in Spain, at the outset, promised more important operations, but they had not terminated in any considerable results. The effects of the disaster of Almanza were still deeply felt. The same jealousies between Lord Galway and the Spanish generals and Government, prevented any considerable operation either from being undertaken or being brought to a successful issue. Although the cabinet of Vienna, at the urgent entreaty of Marlborough, at length sent 7300 men to reinforce the army in Catalonia; yet, even with the aid of this considerable reinforcement, it was weak and disjointed, without either money, magazines, or clothing—alike incompetent to commence offensive operations, or to defend its own frontier from the invasion of the enemy. The jealousy shown of the Portuguese troops, who had been despatched to succour Catalonia, after the disaster of Almanza exposed it to the danger of immediate conquest, was such that a British squadron was despatched to bring them round to their own country. Even after this source of irritation was removed, the jealousy of foreigners, which seems so inherent in the Spaniards that not even the greatest disasters can eradicate it, produced such continued disputes, that so far from gaining the Allies lost ground in every part of the Peninsula. Lord Galway, who had been removed to Portugal after his ill success at Almanza, was deprived

of his military command, and retained only at Lisbon in his character of ambassador at that Court. Dos Minas was discarded as a general of too enterprising a character, and the direction of the army conferred on the Marquis of Fronteira, who was regarded as more likely to prove subservient to the narrow views and petty jealousies of his Court.¹

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¹ Coxe, iv.
299-301.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
1, 2.

At length Count Staremborg reached Barcelona ; and the German and Dutch reinforcements having arrived, an army of 22,000 men was formed, which in the end of June ventured to take the field, and advanced to endeavour to relieve Tortosa, which was besieged by the Bourbon forces. Although this fortress had always been regarded as the key of Catalonia, on the side of Valencia, yet its fortifications had been left in so dilapidated a state that it surrendered after a feeble defence of a month, before the Allied troops could advance to its relief ; and although the garrison were to be conducted to the Allied headquarters in the camp at Constantine, yet great part of them deserted to the enemy before they reached that destination. After this Staremborg took post at Cervera—a position so well chosen that it prevented a design which the French commanders had formed of uniting their forces in Roussillon and Aragon, and shutting up the Allies within the walls of Barcelona. But this was only effected by such a concentration of forces as compelled him to abandon Denia to its fate, which was reduced by the Chevalier D'Asfeld in November, and to witness with impotent grief the investment of Alicante, the last remnant of the Austrian conquests in Valencia.²

^{3.}
Fall of
Tortosa and
Denia.

² Coxe, iv.
306, 307.
Hist. Mil.
viii. 547-
549.

In Italy the divisions of the Allies appeared with equally unfavourable effects on the military operations.

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4.
Nugatory
campaign on
the Italian
frontier.

The convention concluded for the neutrality of Italy did not extend to the south of France ; but the quarrels of Victor Amadeus and the Austrians were such that they rendered any joint operations hopeless. In the spring of 1708, the former positively refused to allow his troops to march, unless the Emperor would confer on him the investiture of part of the Montferrat, which had been promised him by the treaty of 1703 ; and when, by the earnest entreaties of Marlborough, this point was conceded, he availed himself of the usual delays of the German princes in furnishing their contingents to postpone sending his troops into the field till the middle of July. The contingents, however, having at length arrived, General Daun, who commanded the combined forces, crossed the Little St Bernard and Mont Cenis ; and having by a skilful feint drawn the attention of his opponent, Marshal Villars, to the side of Fort Barreaux, he suddenly invested the forts of Exilles and Perugia, which only held out a few days. Following up this advantage, he besieged the important fortress of Fenestrelles, commanding the great pass of Mont Cenis, which, after an obstinate defence, was reduced in the end of August. The fall of snow in the higher Alps, after this, caused both parties to return to their cantonments on either side of the Alps ; and this terminated the campaign in Savoy, with no advantage to the Allies, except that—which, however, was by no means inconsiderable—of having gained the command of the passes leading from Piedmont into Dauphiny.¹

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii. 7.
Coxe, iv.
305-307.

Although the success of this invasion was by no means considerable, and certainly nothing to what might have been expected from the magnitude of the forces employed, yet it led the Duke of Savoy to form the most

extravagant hopes from the project of an invasion of France on the side both of Lyons and Franche-Comté; and for this purpose he demanded a large subsidy in money, and the aid of fifty thousand men under Prince Eugene, to operate on the Upper Rhine. Marlborough was well aware, from past experience, of the little reliance to be placed on any military operations in which the Emperor and the Italian powers were to be placed in co-operation. He was therefore far from sanguine of the success of their design; but as it was material to keep the court of Turin in good-humour, he gave the proposal the most respectful attention, and sent General Palmer on a special mission to the Duke of Savoy, to arrange the plan of the proposed irruption into the Lyonnais. With the cabinet of Berlin the case was just the reverse. The difficulties there were greater than ever, and, in fact, had become so urgent that nothing but the presence of the English general, or an immediate agent from him, could prevent Prussia from seceding altogether from the Alliance. General Grumbkow was sent there accordingly in March, and found the king in such ill-humour at the repeated disappointments he had experienced from the Emperor and the Dutch, that he declared he could only spare *three battalions* for the approaching campaign.¹* By great exertions, however, and the aid of Marlborough's letters and influence, the King was at length prevailed on to continue his

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5.
Projects of
the courts
of Turin
and Berlin
for the next
campaign.

¹ King of
Prussia to
Marlbo-
rough,
March 9,
1709.
Coxe, iv.
346.

* "Can I do more than I do now?" said the king. "I make treaties, but the Emperor breaks his word with me, as well as Holland, every moment. Besides, it is impossible, without great inconvenience, to give more than *three battalions*; and he is a wretch who would advise me otherwise." I said he was a wretch who should advise him not to do it. He replied, "You speak very boldly, and may perhaps repent it, if your arguments are not conclusive."—*General Grumbkow to Marlborough, March 9, 1709; Coxe, iv. 341.*

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6.
His cold
reception
from the
court of
England,
and mission
to the
Hague.

present troops in the Low Countries, and to increase them by fourteen squadrons of horse.

But it was not on the Continent only that open enemies or lukewarm and treacherous friends were striving to arrest the course of Marlborough's victories. His difficulties at home, both with his own party and his opponents, were hourly increasing; and it was already foreseen that they had become so formidable, that, at no very remote period, they would cause his fall. Though he was publicly thanked, as well he might, by both Houses of Parliament, when he came to London on 1st March 1709, loaded with the honours of Oudenarde and Lille, yet he received no mark of favour from the Queen, and was treated with studied coldness at Court.* Envy, the inseparable attendant on exalted merit—ingratitude, the usual result of irrequitable services, had completely altered the Queen's sentiments in regard to him. Mrs Masham omitted nothing which could alienate her royal mistress from so formidable a rival; and it was hard to say whether she was most cordially aided in her efforts by the open Opposition, or the half Tory-Whigs who formed the administration. Both Godolphin and the Duke speedily found that they were merely tolerated in office; while, in order to weaken their influence with the people, every effort was made to depreciate even the glorious victories which had shed such imperishable lustre over the British arms.¹ Deeply mortified by this ingratitude, Marlborough gladly embraced an offer which

¹ Coxe, iv.
352, 366,
377. Marl-
borough to
the Duchess,
Nov. 28,
1708. Coxe,
iv. 361.

* In communicating the thanks of the House of Lords, the Chancellor said, "I shall not be thought to exceed my present commission if, being thus led to contemplate the mighty things which your Grace has done for us, I cannot but conclude with acknowledging, with all gratitude, the providence of God in raising you up to be an instrument of so much good, in so critical a juncture, when it was so much wanted."—Coxe, iv. 375.

was made to him by the Government, in order to remove him from Court, to conduct the negotiation now pending at the Hague with Louis XIV., for the conclusion of a general peace.

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1709.

So painful had the situation of Godolphin become that he himself said, the life of a slave in the galleys was a paradise compared to his.* All his measures were thwarted by the secret influence at Court, which rendered almost nugatory the command he had of the cabinet; while, at the same time, the altered state of the public opinion in regard to the Whig cabinet, and the policy of continuing the war, rendered it impossible to think of a dissolution. Marlborough had his full share of these vexations; for, in addition to all the crosses and disappointments which weighed so heavily on his friend at home, he was oppressed by the cares and anxieties of the war, and the extreme difficulty of keeping together the heterogeneous materials, and stilling the ceaseless jealousies of the coalition.† Nor were affairs at home in a more propitious state. Even among the leaders of his own party, Halifax, who had never forgiven the slight, as he deemed it, cast upon him by the refusal of the situation of Plenipotentiary at the Hague, had

7.
Increasing
difficulties
of Godol-
phin in the
ministry.

* "I don't use to trouble you with complaints of my own circumstances; but so much advantage is taken of your absence, and I suffer so much, that I must give myself the vent of saying, the life of a slave in the galleys is paradise in comparison of mine: but at first, the length of the campaign would not let you come, afterwards the States would not let you come, and now God Almighty won't let you. So I must yield to fate."—*Godolphin to Marlborough*, January 10, 1709; COXE, iv. 356.

† "If Lord Sunderland's news letter be true, I should hope the King of France were in earnest; and then there would be a peace, which, upon all accounts, I long for, being extremely weary of the life I am obliged to live; for my spirit is so broke that I am fit for nothing but a lazy quiet life, which I prefer before all the pleasures of this life."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, Feb. 21, 1709; COXE, iv. 357.

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become not only hostile in his conduct, but contemptuous in his language : and such was the irritation of the Whig chiefs at both Marlborough and Godolphin that they almost completely alienated the Duchess herself. In her letters to her husband, she now depicted these leaders in as sombre colours as she had formerly done the Tory. She described Somers as repulsive and disrespectful ; Halifax as vain, ambitious, and petulant ; and Sunderland as ambitious, proud, and ungrateful. She did not conceal her suspicions that they were in secret, with Harley and Mrs Masham, conspiring to overturn him and Godolphin, and erect their own power on the ruins of the former leaders of the state.¹*

¹ Coxe, iv.
336-359.

8.
Increasing
irritations
owing to
Admiral
Churchill's
conduct.

The violence of the feuds which distracted the cabinet and the Court was much increased by the zeal with which the Prince of Denmark and his great adviser, Admiral Churchill, expressed their antipathy to the Whigs in general, and to Somers in particular. The conduct of the Admiral was indiscreet in the highest degree, for, finding himself supported by the Queen and Prince, he exerted all his influence, in spite of his brother's earnest remonstrances, to thwart and counteract the Whigs. As a natural consequence of this, it was determined in the cabinet to remove him from office, as

* "What you say of Lord Halifax I have believed for a long time. If he had no other fault but his unreasonable vanity, that alone would be capable of making him guilty of any fault. For God's sake do not endeavour to hinder anybody making their interest with Mrs Masham, but agree with me in contemning anything that others may think vexes me ; for I swear to you solemnly that your love and quiet I prefer to all the greatness of this world, and had rather live a private life than be the greatest man England ever had. I do not wonder, nor shall be much troubled by anything Mr Harley may say of me, for I shall desire nobody's friendship but that my actions shall speak for me, which shall be governed by the understanding which God has given me as to what is best for the interest of England. I think the principles of the Whigs are for the good of England, and that, if the Tories had the power,

a preparatory step to a direct attack on the Prince himself. In this painful intrigue the Duchess, as usual, took a prominent part, not only importuning her husband with incessant complaints, but addressing a letter to the Queen full of bitter invectives, and complaining that all the brilliant services of her husband could not shield his brother from injury and insult at the hands of the Government. So pressing, however, were the demands of the Whigs, that Godolphin saw no alternative but to acquiesce in them, and consent to the Admiral's removal, which it was hoped might obviate the irritation which had taken place. But his removal was far from appeasing either the violence of the one party or the intrigues of the other.¹

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1709.

¹ Cox, iv.
313-315.

A melancholy event which took place at this period suspended for a moment, and but for a moment, the mutual estrangement of the Queen and the Duchess. This was the death of the Prince of Denmark, which took place on the 28th October. He had long been in a declining state of health, and the grief of the Queen brought the Duchess at length to her door, notwithstanding the irritation which had grown up between them.* She waited upon the Queen by her own desire; but her Majesty received her, to use her own expression, "very

9.
Death of
the Prince
of Den-
mark, Octo-
ber 28.

they would not only destroy England, but also the liberties of Europe. The behaviour of Lord Sunderland looks like madness, for it is impossible for him to have a thought of being tolerably well with Mrs Masham. I agree with you that Lord Halifax has no other principle but his ambition."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, Nov. 28, 1708, and Feb. 7, 1709; COXE, iv. 363-364.

* "Though the last time I had the honour to wait upon your Majesty your usages of me were such as was scarce possible for me to imagine, or for anybody to believe, yet I cannot hear of so great a misfortune and affliction to you as the condition the Prince is in, without coming to pay my duty in inquiring after your health."—*Duchess of Marlborough to Queen Anne*, Oct. 26, 1708; COXE, iv. 321, 322.

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coolly, and like a stranger." She again waited on the Queen the following morning, and was present when the Prince expired. With affectionate zeal she removed her royal mistress from this sad spectacle to her closet, and, desiring the other attendants to withdraw, she knelt down, and endeavoured to soothe the agonies of her grief, continuing in that posture till the first emotion had subsided. The Queen delivered her watch to the Duchess, desiring her to retire till the hand had reached a particular point, and ordered her then to send Mrs Masham. The Duchess withdrew, deeply hurt at this mark of preference, but did not deliver the message to Mrs. Masham.¹

¹ Coxe, iv.
321-324.

10.
Deplorable
situation of
the French
monarch.

While these untoward events were undermining the last foundation of Marlborough's power at home, the difficulties of the King of France were still greater. In truth, the condition of France was such that it might well be termed desperate; and all the firmness with which its ruler was gifted seemed inadequate to stemming the torrent of disaster with which the monarchy was overwhelmed. A contemporary annalist has left the following picture of the state of the country at this disastrous epoch:—"France without credit saw its resources exhausted; the dreadful winter of 1708-9 had brought its sufferings to a climax; without hope of a harvest, and almost without magazines, it could not import but at a ruinous cost, from Africa and the Levant, the necessary means of subsistence; and even when purchased, they ran the risk of being intercepted by the numerous fleets of the enemy. But for the infamous cupidity of the forestallers, it would have found sufficient resources in the riches of the preceding harvests; but in all ages the cupidity of selfish men has made gain of the

lives of men. The Dutch had provisions sufficient for the flourishing armies of their allies, while the French troops were dying of famine. It was not in the power of Desmarets, the finance minister, to re-establish the finances, nor in that of M. Voisin to lay out plans of the campaign more fortunate than those of M. Chamillard, whom he had succeeded. Such were the ravages which famine exercised in France, that for several months in winter they ate nothing but black bread. At Versailles many families, after the example of Madame de Maintenon, lived on oat-cakes. In these desperate circumstances, the monarch humbled himself in his turn by demanding peace of the haughty republicans whom he had humiliated, and almost crushed under the weight of his power, in the days of his glory."¹

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1709.

¹ Hist. de Marl. iii. 17, 18.

The pride of the French monarch was now so much reduced that he sent the President Rouillé to Holland, with public instructions to offer terms to the Allies, and private directions to do everything possible to sow dissension among them, and, if possible, to detach Holland from the Alliance. His proposals were to give up Spain, the Indies, and the Milanese to King Charles; and to cede the Italian islands, reserving Naples and Sicily for his grandson. In the Netherlands and Germany, he offered to restore matters to the state in which they were at the peace of Ryswick; and though he was very reluctant to give up Lille, he offered to cede Menin in its place. These terms, in themselves so advantageous, were enforced by Rouillé with all that eloquence of which he was so entire a master, and all the finesse and diplomatic skill which enabled him to penetrate into the inmost recesses of the human heart.² But of what avail is finesse with those who speak the language of con-

^{11.} Great concessions offered by Louis.

March 5.

² Hist. de Marl. iii. 18, 19. Coxe, iv. 393, 394.

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12.
Counter
proposals
of the
Allies.

querors, and in the pride of their hearts cast away the very mask of dissimulation ?

These terms being communicated to the Court of London, they returned an answer insisting on the restoration of the whole Spanish monarchy to the house of Austria ; the acknowledgment of the title of Queen Anne to the Crown of England, and the Protestant succession ; the removal of the Pretender, the destruction of the harbour of Dunkirk, and that an adequate barrier should be secured to the Dutch. In their ideas upon this barrier, however, they went much beyond what Marlborough was disposed to sanction, and he therefore maintained a prudent reserve on the subject. As the French plenipotentiary could not agree to these terms, Marlborough returned to England, and Lord Townsend was associated with him as plenipotentiary. They were instructed to insist that Furnes, Ypres, Menin, Lille, Tournay, Condé, Valenciennes, and Maubeuge, should be given up to form a barrier, and that Newfoundland and Hudson's Bay should be restored. When these terms were read in the cabinet of Versailles, the scene, says M. de Torcy, "was so melancholy that no words can describe it, even if it were permitted to reveal state secrets." Tears were shed on all sides by all present, from the princes of the blood downwards ; for so disastrous was the picture which the ministers both of war and of the finances drew of the state of the country, that there did not appear a chance of escaping the disgrace with which France was threatened.¹

¹ Coxe, iv.
381, 382.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
21-23.

13.
Progress of
the nego-
tiations.

Alarmed at the exaction of such rigorous terms, Louis sent M. de Torcy, who made large concessions ; and Marlborough, who was seriously desirous of bringing the war to a conclusion, exerted all his influence

with the States to induce them to accept the barrier offered. He exerted himself to the utmost to get them to recede from the rigorous demands in regard to the fortified towns. He so far succeeded that, on the very day after his return to the Hague, he wrote both to Lord Godolphin and the Duchess of Marlborough, that he had prevailed on the Dutch commissioners to accede to the principal articles, and that he had no doubt the negotiation would terminate in an honourable peace.* These flattering prospects, however, were soon overcast. The Dutch renewed their demand of having their barrier strengthened *at the expense of Austria*, and insisted that the Flemish fortresses of Dendermonde and Ghent, forming part of the *Imperial* dominions, should be included in it. To this both Eugene and Marlborough objected, and the Dutch, in spite, refused to stipulate for the demolition of Dunkirk. So violent an altercation took place on the subject, between the Pensionary Heinsius and Marlborough, that it had wellnigh produced a schism in the Grand Alliance.¹

M. de Torcy at first endeavoured to mitigate the demands of the Dutch government; but finding them altogether immovable, he addressed himself privately to Marlborough, offering him enormous bribes if he could procure more favourable terms for France. The offers were 2,000,000 livres (£80,000) if he could

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¹ Mem. de Torcy, 164-169—edit. Petitot. Hist. de Marl. iii. 24, 25.

^{14.} M. de Torcy secretly offers bribes to Marlborough, which are refused.

* "M. de Torcy has offered so much, that I have no doubt it will end in a good peace."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, 19th May, 1707.

"Everything goes on so well here that there is no doubt of its ending in a good peace. Government have in readiness the sideboard of plate, and the chairs of state and canopy; and I beg it may be made so as to form part of a bed when I am done with it here, *which I hope may be by the end of this summer*, so that I may enjoy your dear society in quiet, which is the greatest satisfaction I am capable of having."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, 19th May, 1709; COXE, iv. 393.

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VII.

1769.

¹ Swift's
Conduct of
the Allies,
72. Coxe,
iv. 395-415.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
24, 25.
Mém de.
Torcy, ii.
104-111.

15.
Remarkable
conversa-
tion of M.
de Torcy
with Marl-
borough.

secure Naples and Sicily, or even Naples alone, for the grandson of the King of France; and 4,000,000 livres (£160,000) if, in addition to this, he could save Strasbourg, Dunkirk, and Landau, for France. Marlborough turned away from the disgraceful proposal with coldness and contempt; but enforced in the most earnest manner, on the French king, the prudence, and even necessity, of yielding to the proffered terms, if he would save his country from dismemberment and himself from ruin. His efforts, however, to bring matters to an accommodation with France proved ineffectual; and after some weeks spent in proposals and counter proposals, the ultimatum of the Allies was finally delivered to the French plenipotentiary by the Pensionary of Holland.¹

M. de Torcy, the able negotiator of Louis XIV. at the Hague, has left a very interesting account of his private conference with Marlborough, in a letter to the king on this important occasion. "After the Duke," says he, "had made me many compliments and apologies for the liberty he had taken in fixing an hour, and not anticipating my visit, I went to him after dinner. If I should recount to your Majesty all the protestations which he made of his profound respect and attachment, and of his desire one day to merit your protection, I should fill this letter with things less essential than I actually have to recount. His conversation was animated in the extreme. He spoke of the restoration of Newfoundland, and evinced an earnest desire to be able to serve the Prince of Wales, as the son of a prince for whom he would so willingly sacrifice his blood and his life. He said he would have remained in Holland, instead of returning to England, if he had been aware that a minister of your Majesty was coming. He

expressed great regret at not having been previously informed that such was to be the case, as he might easily have been, if the Duke of Berwick had been instructed to communicate to him on the subject. In addition to the affectation on his part in naming the Duke of Berwick, he evinced great tenderness for a nephew worthy of the esteem and friendship of all who knew him.

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1769.

“Politeness characterised everything which he said. He omitted no opportunity of speaking of his respect, I may even say attachment, to your Majesty’s person. It was in France, and under Turenne, he said, that he had learned the art of war ; he would never forget it. His expressions were accompanied by protestations of sincerity to which deeds have not corresponded, of oaths on his honour and his conscience, frequently mentioning the name of God, to whom he appealed as a witness of the uprightness of his intentions. He spoke of the marvels of Providence, to which he ascribed the whole events of the war, in order to convince me that *France had not a moment to lose in concluding a peace* ; that its salvation depended on the immediate termination of the war, at any price, and on any condition. He frequently said that it was to the hand of the Almighty that was to be ascribed the concord of the eight nations which composed the Alliance, all of which thought and acted as one man ; and that is, it must be admitted, a prodigy without example in the history of leagues. He spoke very contemptuously of Lord Townsend, saying he was merely the shadow of a plenipotentiary ; and descanted largely on the extravagant ideas of his countrymen, saying that there was no limit to their expectations ; that they thought it was for their interest,

16.
His sentiments expressed to M. de Torcy on a peace.

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as well as in their power, to ruin France, although the few wise people who have not the power *are persuaded, like himself, that the time had now arrived when it was proper to conclude an advantageous peace.*" Marlborough, continued De Torcy, "falsely protested that he wished for peace, and would do all in his power to bring it about. He constantly alleged that France was in the wrong, in not agreeing to it; that its interest required that it should be concluded, and that they should accede without delay to the conditions proposed. Pettekurn answered on our side, that the king would probably break off the negotiation, rather than admit them. 'So much the worse for France,' answered Marlborough; 'for if once the campaign is commenced, matters will go farther than the king imagines.'" ¹

¹ De Torcy's
Mém. 186—
edit. Petit.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
27, 28.

17.
Ultimatum
of the Al-
lies, which
is rejected
by France.

By the ultimatum of the Allies, Charles was to be acknowledged King of Spain and the Indies, and the whole Spanish monarchy was to be ceded by France. All the conquests of Louis in the Low Countries were to be given up; the Duke of Anjou was to surrender Spain and Sicily in two months, and if these kingdoms were not then delivered, *Louis was to concur with the Allies for his expulsion.* The barrier towns, so eagerly coveted by the Dutch, were to be given up to them. Namur, Menin, Charleroi, Luxembourg, Condé, Tournay, Maubeuge, Nieuport, Fismes, and Ypres, were to be put into the possession of the Allies. De Torcy objected to the articles regarding the cession of the whole Spanish monarchy in two months; though he declared his willingness to go to Paris in order to persuade the French monarch to comply with them, and actually set off for that purpose. On the way to the French capital, he

traversed crowds who, with almost menacing supplications, entreated him to conclude peace. When he arrived at Versailles, however, a cabinet council was summoned, at which the Dauphin assisted, and by it the proposals were unanimously refused. "If I must continue the war," said Louis, with a spirit worthy of his race, "it is better to contend with my enemies than my own family." So firmly had it been believed, both at the Hague and in London, that peace was not only probable, but actually concluded, that letters of congratulation poured in on the Duke from all quarters, celebrating his dexterity and address in negotiation not less than his prowess in arms. So confident, indeed, was Marlborough that peace would be concluded, that he was grievously disappointed by the rupture of the negotiations; and he never ceased to strive, during the whole summer, to smooth away difficulties, and bring the Allies to such terms as the French king would accept.¹

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The messenger bringing the ultimatum of the French king, declining the proposals of the Allies, arrived at the Hague on the 5th June, and conveyed to Rouillé an order to notify the decision in form to the Duke of Marlborough, as well as the other plenipotentiaries. Notwithstanding the great disappointment which he felt at this breaking off of the negotiations, the English general continued to entertain the hopes of peace, and never ceased to regret the rupture. He still clung to the belief that an accommodation would be arrived at, and in his confidential letters expressed not only a sanguine hope, but a confident belief, that the preliminaries would yet be ratified.² He was so confident in this expectation that he even commenced arrangements with the Lord-Treasurer for the return of

¹ Coxe, iv. 397-399. Hist. de Marl. iii. 30-35.

^{18.} Marlborough still labours to effect a pacification.

² Marlborough to Godolphin, June 4, 1709. Coxe, iv. 400, 401.

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the army to England, and the payment of the arrears due to all the foreign troops ; so that, to use his own words, " they might have no pretext to refuse marching, when ordered home agreeably to the treaties."

19.
False accusation
against
Marlbo-
rough of
having pre-
vented the
peace.

Although Marlborough had thus exerted himself to the utmost to bring about a general peace, and laboured alike to moderate the pretensions of the English ministry, and to conquer the repugnance of the French king, yet so virulent is the spirit of party, and so utterly regardless of truth in the charges which it advances, that no accusation has been so perseveringly fastened on Marlborough, or so generally believed, as that of having exerted himself to break the negotiations which he was labouring assiduously to bring to a successful issue. He was overruled, however, by the ministry at home, who concluded the celebrated barrier treaty with the Dutch, which Marlborough refused to sign, and which was accordingly signed by Townsend alone, without his concurrence ! And it is now decisively proved, by the publication of his private correspondence with Lord Godolphin, that he disapproved of the severe articles insisted upon by the Allies and his own cabinet ; and that, if the uncontrolled management of the negotiation had been committed to him, it would have been brought to a favourable issue on terms highly advantageous to England, and which would have prevented the treaty of Utrecht from forming a stain on its annals.¹ *

¹ Coxe, iv.
404-406.
Marlbo-
rough to
Godolphin,
June 10,
1709. Coxe,
iv. 405.

When the refusal of the French king to accept the ulti-

* " I have as much mistrust for the sincerity of France as anybody living can have ; but I will own to you that, in my opinion, if France had delivered the towns promised by the plenipotentiaries, and demolished Dunkirk and the other towns mentioned, they must have been at our discretion ; so that if they had played tricks, so much the worse for themselves."—*Marlborough to Lord Godolphin*, June 10, 1709 ; COXE, iv. 405.

matum of the Allies was received at the Hague, the States-General assembled, and passed a resolution in the following terms, which embodied the unanimous opinions of the Allied cabinets on the occasion :—" As the refusal on the part of France to accept the preliminaries had been foreseen, the ministers of the Emperor and of Her Britannic Majesty have determined that they could not admit of any alteration, especially on the essential and most contested articles, which concern the security of the Grand Alliance in general, and that of each of the states of which it is composed in particular. The deputies have maturely considered the matter, and are of opinion that they cannot recede from the demand of a barrier for the Duke of Savoy ; that the pretensions regarding the two dispossessed Electors could lead to no other result but that of sowing dissension among the Allies ; that the refusal on the part of the French king of the thirty-sixth article, which obliges him, within the space of two months, to execute what he undertakes, would annul all the rest, which would become useless without that ; that if France engaged merely not to send any succours to the Duke of Anjou, the Allies would be under the necessity of continuing the war in Spain, and the other countries which acknowledged the authority of that Prince, while they would be bound to remain in inactivity in the Low Countries, the theatre of their great success ; that the war for the reduction of Spain might be subject to various changes, during which France alone would be at peace, which would directly traverse the end proposed in listening to the overtures of its sovereign.¹ From all these considerations the deputies have unanimously arrived at the conclusion that the changes proposed by the French king cannot

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20.
Resolution
of the States-
General on
the rupture
of the ne-
gotiations.

¹ Résolu-
tion des
Etats-Géné-
raux, June
7, 1709.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
41, 42.

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be admitted ; and that, as the enemy has receded so far, after having made such advances towards a general peace, it has become indispensable to combat them with vigour and firmness, in order to constrain them to close with the proposals which have been made to them by the Allied powers."

21.
Reflections
on the rup-
ture of this
negotiation.

On considering the respective merits of the great debate, and the rupture of a negotiation fraught with such incalculable consequences on the future fate of Europe, it must be evident to every impartial observer that it broke off not on any minor or inconsiderable point, but on the grand question involved in the whole quarrel, and for the solution of which the war had been undertaken. It was the interest of the Spanish succession which broke off the negotiation. The proposal of Louis that there should be a suspension of hostilities elsewhere, but the Allies should be left to carry on the war in Spain, in order to dispossess the Duke of Anjou, was directly calculated to stop hostilities in the quarter where France was endangered, and let them continue their course in that where she had the advantage. A single defeat, the reduction of two or three strong places, might bring the Allies to Paris, and enable them to dictate a humiliating peace in the halls of Versailles : years of doubtful, costly, and harassing warfare would hardly put them in possession of the throne of Madrid. The counter propositions of Louis, therefore, went to relieve him of the danger which threatened him, and at the same time secure the advantages which he had won during the war ; and Marlborough and the other plenipotentiaries would have deserted their duty if they had counselled the adoption of terms which defeated the whole objects of the war.

The rigorous terms demanded, however, by the Allied cabinets, and the resolute conduct of the king of France in rejecting them, had an important effect upon the war, and called for more vigorous efforts on the part of the confederates than they had yet put forth, or were even now disposed to make. Louis made a touching appeal to the patriotic spirit of his people, in an eloquent circular which he addressed to the prelates and nobles of his realm. He there set forth the great sacrifices which he had offered to make to secure a general peace; showed how willing he had been to divest himself of all his conquests, and abandon all his dreams of ambition; and concluded by observing, that he was now compelled to continue the contest, because the Allies insisted upon his descending to the humiliation of joining his armies to theirs, for the purpose of dispossessing his own grandson.* The appeal was not made in vain to the spirit of a gallant nobility, and the patriotism of a brave people. It kindled a flame of general enthusiasm and loyalty. All ranks and parties vied with each other in contributing their property and personal service for the maintenance of the war; and the

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22.

Noble ef-
forts of
Louis to
save France.

* "The hope of an approaching peace was so generally diffused through my kingdom, that I feel I owe it to the fidelity which my people have shown me during my whole reign, to put them in possession of the circumstances which have prevented them from now enjoying a blessing which I had endeavoured to procure for them. I would have accepted, to attain such an object, conditions inconsistent with the security of my frontier provinces; but the more I showed myself disposed to dissipate the jealousy which my enemies affected to feel of my power and my designs, the more did they rise in their demands, in so far that, multiplying one requisition upon another, and making use of the name at one time of the Duke of Savoy, at another of the pretended interest of the princes of the Empire, they have made manifest their determination not merely to increase, at the expense of my crown, the states immediately adjoining France, but to open to themselves avenues by which they might penetrate into the interior of my kingdom whenever they deemed it for their interest to renew the war. Even that in which I am now engaged,

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¹ Capefigue,
Hist. de
Louis XIV.
vi. 42-46.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
36, 37.
Coxe, iv.
401.

campaign which opened under such disastrous auspices was commenced with a degree of energy and unanimity, on the part of the French people, which had never hitherto been evinced in the course of the contest. As afterwards, in the wars of the Revolution, too, the misfortunes of the state tended to the increase of its military forces. The stoppage of commerce, and shock to credit, threw numbers out of employment; and starving multitudes crowded to the frontier, to find that subsistence amidst the dangers of war which they could no longer find in the occupations of peace.¹

23.
Eulogy of
M. Dumont
on the conduct
of
France on
this occasion.

M. Dumont, one of the ablest historians of the Grand Alliance, has borne the following honourable testimony to the conduct of the French king and people on this occasion: "With truth it may be said, that never had the material resources of France been so manifested as they were on this occasion. After the battles of Hochstedt, of Ramilies, of Turin, and of Oudenarde, the entire destruction of its maritime resources, the disastrous issue of the sieges of Turin and Barcelona, it appeared impossible it could be raised from its pro-

and which I was so desirous to terminate, would not have ceased if I had consented to all the conditions which they sought to impose upon me; for they fixed at two months the time during which I was to be obliged on my part to execute the conditions of the treaty, and during that period they insisted upon laying me under an obligation to deliver to them the fortresses which they demanded in the Low Countries and in Alsace, and to raze those of which they demanded the demolition. They refused, on their part, to come under any other engagement but that of suspending all acts of hostility till the 1st August, reserving to themselves the right of then resuming their arms in the event of my grandson, the King of Spain, persisting in his resolution of defending the crown which God had given him, and to perish rather than abandon the faithful people who, during nine years, have recognised him as their lawful sovereign. Such a suspension, more dangerous than war itself, destroyed all hopes of peace more than it advanced them; for it rendered it necessary, not only to continue the same expenses for the support of the armies, but, on the termination of the suspension of hostilities, my enemies

strate condition. A crisis without example had taken place in its finances, and in its whole affairs. Credit was gone, specie had disappeared, commerce was at a stand, bankruptcy was universal, misery and insolvency were universal. To crown the whole, famine was making unheard-of ravages in the land. What an incredible and admirable change took place in the midst of the general ruin! They found the means of putting on foot in Flanders a numerous army, of finding subsistence in abundance, and providing funds to pay the troops, and retain them in the bonds of discipline. They regularly paid the soldier his dues—the officer alone was kept in arrear. It was presumed he would act from a spirit of patriotism and honour, and the expectation was not disappointed.”¹ There is no impartial mind which must not acquiesce in the justice of this generous eulogium.¹

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¹ Dumont's
Hist. Mil.
v. 172.

Skilfully availing themselves of this burst of patriotic fervour, the ministers of Louis were enabled to open the campaign with greater forces than they had ever collected since the beginning of the war. The principal

24.
Forces on
both sides
at the open-
ing of the
campaign.

would have assailed us with new advantages drawn from the places into which I myself had introduced them, while at the same time I had demolished those which served as the rampart of my frontier provinces. As I put my protection into the hands of Almighty God, and as I hope that the purity of my intentions will induce the Divine blessing on my armies, I have written to the archbishops and bishops of my kingdom, to awaken the fervour of the prayers of the faithful in their dioceses; and I wish, at the same time, that my people throughout the whole extent of your government should know that they would now have been in the enjoyment of peace, if it had depended solely on my will to procure what they with reason desire, but which must be acquired by new efforts, since the immense sacrifices which I was prepared to have made have been vain to re-establish the public tranquillity. I leave it, therefore, to your prudence to make my intentions known in the manner which you deem most expedient to the people of your province.

“LOUIS.

“VERSAILLES, 12th June 1709.”

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effort was made in Flanders, where the chief danger was to be apprehended, and the enemy's most powerful army and greatest general were to be faced. Fifty-one battalions and forty-nine squadrons were drawn from the Rhine to Flanders; and this large reinforcement, joined to the crowds of recruits which the public distress impelled to his standards, enabled the renowned Marshal Villars, who had received the command of the French, to take the field at the head of 112,000 men. With this imposing force he took a position, strong both by nature and art, extending from Douai to the Lys; the right resting on the canal of Douay, the centre covered by the village of La Bassée, the left supported by Bethune and its circumjacent marshes. The whole line was strengthened by redoubts and partial inundations, and traversed in front by a ditch fifteen feet wide, covered by exterior works. The banks of the canal, as far as Douai, were lined with troops. Never at any former period had France sent such an army into the field; never had she one animated with so enthusiastic and gallant a spirit. The soldiers, equally with the nobles, were aware that this was the last effort for the independence of France. All felt, in the words afterwards used by Napoleon at Waterloo, "that the moment had arrived when it behoved every Frenchman to conquer or die."¹

¹ Hist. de
Marib. iii.
46, 47.
Rousset, ii.
274.

25.
Marlborough's
efforts to
obtain an
augmentation
of force
in the Low
Countries.

Aware of the great augmentation of the enemy's army which was in progress in Flanders, seeing clearly that it was there that the vital point of the contest was to be, and not less convinced of the necessity of reinforcements to stem the progress of disaster in Spain, Marlborough made the most vigorous efforts to obtain, both from the British government and the Allied powers, an increase

of forces for carrying on the war. He knew well that the enemy was bringing forth his last reserve ; that the *ban* and *arrière ban* of France were in the field ; that this was their final effort ; and that victory in this protracted struggle would remain with the party in war, as in a battle, which could throw in a reserve to which the enemy had nothing at the moment to oppose. By dint of vigorous representations, and by still having the majority of the cabinet and House of Commons on his side, though in a minority at Court, he succeeded in obtaining a reinforcement of 10,000 men to the English army ; and the supplies voted for the ensuing year reached the unprecedented, and, as it was then thought, enormous amount of £7,000,000 sterling. But the other powers could not be prevailed on to make any similar additions to their contingents : and so little was the British government aware of the necessity of augmenting the forces at the vital point, that, instead of making any addition to their troops in the Netherlands, they proposed to *withdraw* seven regiments from Antwerp, and send them to Spain. Marlborough expressed, as well he might, the utmost uneasiness at this extravagant proposal—a proposal which shows what so many other events in English history demonstrate, how ignorant its government in general is of the first principles of military operations.¹ *

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¹ Coxe, iv. 350, 355, 372. Marlborough to Godolphin, Feb. 7, 1709. Coxe, iv. 372.

* " I received last night the favour of yours of the 7th January, in which you continue of opinion that the seven regiments at Antwerp should be sent to England. I can say no more on that subject. You will see what the enclosed letter says as to the designs of France. As they draw their troops from all parts to strengthen their army in this country, if we, at the same time, are to be obliged to leave our troops where they cannot be of much use, there can be no doubt but at length *my Lord Faversham will be gratified by our being beaten, for so great a superiority will undo us.* I am of your opinion, that one reason for the enemy marching their troops from all parts so early

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26.

Which at
length are
partially
successful.
The forces
at his dis-
posal.

But all that he could obtain from the British government was a promise that the seven battalions should be retained in Flanders, and should not be removed at the commencement of the campaign in the Low Countries. At the same time, he made such vigorous representations to the Dutch ministry, of the danger of taking the field with an inferior force, that he succeeded in obtaining a reinforcement of 4000 Würtembergers, in their pay, who were to be drawn from the Rhine. Yet, with all this, he was still inferior to the enemy when the campaign commenced ; and but for the reinforcements thus tardily yielded to his urgent representations, he would have been so much so that the campaign, so far from leading to a prosperous result, would in all probability have terminated in nothing but disaster. At length, however, Marlborough took the field at the head of 110,000 men ; and although his force was composed of a heterogeneous mixture of the troops of different nations, yet, like the *colluvies omnium gentium* which followed the standards of Hannibal, it was held together by the firm bond of military success, and inspired with that unbounded confidence which is founded on experience of the resources and capacity of its chief. Events of the greatest and most interesting kind could not but be anticipated, from the contest of two armies of such magnitude, headed by such leaders, and when the patriotic ardour of the French nation,¹ now roused to the

¹ Coxe, iv.
371-373 ;
and v. 1-5.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
45, 47.
Rousset, ii.
274, 275.

into this country, is in hope they may incline the Dutch to hearken to peace.” —*Marlborough to Godolphin*, Brussels, Feb. 7, 1710 ; COXE, iv. 372. Again,—“ I know not what you may reason in England, but I am fully persuaded that it is of the last consequence to have the troops of Würtemberg and the seven regiments serve in this country in the next campaign ; for, with those, all the troops that we may be able to get for the sum of money voted by Parliament, for the troops of augmentation, will fall very much short of the number of men the enemy will have in this country. Is it possible that men

uttermost, was matched against the military strength of the confederates, matured by a series of victories so long and brilliant.

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Though relying with confidence on the skill and intrepidity of his troops, Marlborough, according to his usual system, resolved if possible to circumvent the enemy by manœuvring, so as to reserve his hard blows for the time when success was to be won in no other way. His design was to begin the campaign either with a general battle or by the reduction of Tournay, lying on the direct road from Brussels to Lille, which would break through, in the most important part, the barrier fortresses. To prepare for either event, and divert the enemy's attention, strong demonstrations were made against Villars' intrenched position. If it had been practicable, he would have been attacked; but, after a close reconnoitre, both generals deemed it too hazardous an enterprise, and it was resolved to besiege the fortress. In truth, the position which Villars had taken up, and strengthened with all imaginable skill and diligence, was, literally speaking, impregnable. His left rested on Roubaix, to cover St Venant, and his right at Tinquies, to protect Bethune. From thence it extended towards the Scarpe, his left being covered by the streams of the Roubaix and two heights, his centre by the Marsh of Cambrin, and his right by the canal between Douai and Lille. Along this line intrenchments were thrown

27.
Description
of Villars'
position.

of good sense, and that mean sincerely well to the common cause, can be in the least doubt that, if the enemy make their greatest, indeed their only effort in this country, we must do the same, or expect to be beaten? which I pray Almighty God to avert, for it would be a fatal blow. If any orders have been sent for the march of these seven regiments, I do most earnestly beg you will lay before her Majesty and the lords of the cabinet my apprehensions."—*Marlborough to the Lord-Treasurer*, Brussels, Feb. 11, 1710; *Coxe*, iv. 372.

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¹ Rousset,
ii. 275.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
49-51.
Coxe, v.
5, 6.

28.
Marlbo-
rough's
measures to
deceive
Villars.

up wherever they were required ; inundations were formed in the low plains, and hedges cut and palisades constructed to facilitate or protect the communication. Along the whole front a ditch ran fifteen feet wide and six deep, behind which was a rampart ; while, in all exposed situations, outworks, as in a regular fortification, were constructed. Behind them the French army, above a hundred thousand strong, was stationed in three lines, the cavalry being in rear ; while a hundred guns, arrayed along the front, armed the intrenchments. So confident was Villars in the strength of his position, and the magnitude of his army, that he sent a trumpeter to the Allies' headquarters to announce " that they would find him behind his lines ; or, if he was afraid to attack, he would level them to give them entrance."¹

But Marlborough and Eugene had no intentions of gratifying his wishes in either particular. Seeing the position was too strong to be attacked, they resolved on another but not less important operation. On the 23d June, the right under Eugene crossed the Lower Dyle below Lille ; while the left, with which were the whole English and Dutch contingents, crossed the Marque ; and both columns were concentrated on the banks of the Upper Dyle, Marlborough fixing his headquarters at the Abbey of Looz. So threatening were the masses which the Allies now accumulated in his front that Villars never doubted he was about to be attacked ; and in consequence he strengthened his position to the utmost of his power, called in all his detachments, and drew considerable reinforcements from the garrisons of Tournay and the other fortresses in his vicinity. Having thus fixed his antagonist's attention, and concentrated his force in his intrenched lines between

Douai and Bethune, Marlborough suddenly moved off to the left, in the direction of Tournay. This was done, however, with every imaginable precaution to impose upon the enemy. The Allied army decamped at night-fall on the 27th in dead silence, and advanced part of the night straight towards the French lines; but at two in the morning, the troops were suddenly halted, wheeled to the left, and marched in two columns, by Pont-à-Bovines and Pont-à-Tressins, towards Tournay. So expeditiously was the change in the line of march managed, and so complete the surprise, that by seven in the morning the troops were drawn round Tournay, and the investment complete; while half of the garrison being absent in the lines of Marshal Villars, it was thereby rendered incapable of making any prolonged defence. Meanwhile that commander was so deceived that he was congratulating himself that the enemy had "fixed on the siege of Tournay, which should occupy them the whole remainder of the campaign; when it is evident their design had been, after defeating me, to thunder against Aire and St Venant with their heavy artillery, penetrate as far as Boulogne, and, after laying all Picardy under contribution, push on even to Paris."¹

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¹ Mém. de Villars, ii. 63. Marlborough to Godolphin, June 27, 1709. Coxe, v. 5. Hist. de Marl. iii. 52, 53.

Tournay is an old town, the ancient walls of which are of wide circuit; but it has a series of advanced works erected by Vauban, and its citadel, a regular pentagon, was considered by the great Condé as one of the most perfect specimens of modern fortification in existence. So little did the governor expect their approach that many of the officers were absent, and a detachment of the garrison, sent out to forage, were made prisoners by General Lumley, who commanded the investing corps. The fortifications, however, were

29.
Description
of Tournay.

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in the best state, and the magazines well stored with ammunition and military stores. Its circuit is very large, and the Scheldt flows through its centre. Vauban had added immensely to the strength of its works, which exhibited all that modern genius could devise, or modern industry accumulate. It was the ancient capital of the Nervii, so celebrated for their valour in the wars with Cæsar; and an inscription on its walls testified that Louis XIV., after taking it in four days, in 1667, had assisted in the construction of additional works which it was supposed would render it impregnable.* The attempt to take such a place with a force no greater than that which Villars had at hand to interrupt the operations, would have been an enterprise of the utmost temerity, and probably terminated in disaster, had it not been for the admirable skill with which the attention of the enemy had been fixed on another quarter; and the siege commenced with one-half of its garrison absent, and the other imperfectly supplied with provisions.¹

¹ Marlborough to Mr Secretary Boyle, June 27, 1709. Des. iv. 520. Coxe, v. 7, 8. Hist. de Marl. iii. 54, 55.

The heavy artillery and siege equipage required to be brought up the Scheldt from Ghent, which in the outset

* Ludovicus Decimus Quartus
Incertum bello an pace major.
Quibus copiis, consiliis, animo, celeritate,
Fortuna,
Anno MDCLXVII,
Nerviorum Urbem Quatriduo cepert,
Iisdem, *neunquam postea caperetur*,
Inter Cetera Munimenta,
Hoc Quoque
Diebus vix octo
Ab Area et Fundamentis
Ipse instans operi,
Victricibus militum Manibus
Extruxit Anno Domini
MDCLXXI.

—Hist. de Marlborough, iii. 71.

occasioned some delay in the operations. Marlborough commanded the attacking, Eugene the covering forces. By the 6th July, however, the approaches were commenced; on the 10th the battering train arrived, and the trenches were armed; repeated sallies of the enemy to interrupt the operations were repulsed, and several of the outworks were carried between that time and the 21st, on which last occasion the besiegers succeeded in establishing themselves in the covered-ways. The progress of the siege after that was impeded by the water in the great ditch, but at length the besiegers contrived to let it off. The breaching batteries continued to thunder with terrible effect upon the walls; and on the 27th a strong horn-work, called the Seven Fountains, was carried by the Duke of Argyll at the head of his Highland regiment, and the Allies were masters of nearly the whole line of the counterscarp. Meanwhile, Villars made no serious movement to interrupt the besiegers, contenting himself with making demonstrations between the Scarpe and the Scheldt to alarm the covering forces. Eugene, however, narrowly watched all his proceedings; and in truth the French marshal, far from really intending to disquiet the Allies in their operations, was busied with an immense army of pioneers and labourers in constructing a new set of lines from Douai along the Scarpe to the Scheldt near Condé, in order to arrest their progress in the direction they had now taken. Seeing no prospect of being relieved, the governor on the 29th surrendered the town, and retired with the remains of the garrison, still four thousand strong, into the citadel.¹ *

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30.

Siege and
capture of
that town,
July 29.

¹ Marlborough to Lord Galway, July 24, 1709; and to the Queen, July 29, 1709. Des. iv. 530, 556. Coxe, v. 8-13. Hist. de Marl. iii. 67-71. Rousset, ii. 279, 280.

* Marlborough's private letters to the Duchess, at this period, as indeed throughout all his campaigns, prove how tired he was of the war, and how

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31.
Siege of the
citadel, and
its desper-
ate chances.
July 29.

On the surrender of the town, no time was lost in prosecuting operations against the citadel, and the line of circumvallation was traced out that very evening. Thirty battalions and ten squadrons were employed in the perilous enterprise—the former under the command of Count Lothau, the latter of Schulemburg. The batteries were opened on the night of the 31st July, and on the morning of the 2d August all the troops were in the posts assigned to them in the trenches. But the undertaking proved more difficult than had been expected, and several weeks elapsed before any material progress was made in the operations, during which Villars made good use of his time in completing his new lines to cover Valenciennes and Condé. The citadel itself, though not of great extent, was extremely strong. It had five large bastions, an excellent covered-way, and all the usual ravelins and lunettes in the outworks. But its great strength consisted in the mines and counter-mines with which it was environed in every direction, and the explosion of which threatened destruction to any assailants who might approach its walls. The garrison, though inadequate to the defence of the town of Tournay, was quite adequate to that of the citadel; and the vast mines with which the whole outworks and glacis were perforated, rendered the approaches in the highest degree perilous and difficult. The governor, M. de Surville, proposed, on the 5th

ardently he sighed for repose at Blenheim. "The taking of the citadel of Tournay will, I fear, cost us more men and time than that of the town; but that which gives me the greatest prospect for the happiness of being with you, is, that certainly the misery of France increases, which must bring us a peace. The misery of the poor people we see is such that one must be a brute not to pity them. May you be ever happy, and I enjoy some few years of quiet with you, is what I daily pray for."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, July 30, 1709; COXE, v. 12.

August, to capitulate in a month if not relieved ; and to this proposition Marlborough and Eugene, with praiseworthy humanity, at once agreed : but the King of France refused to ratify the terms proposed, unless the suspension of arms was made general to the whole Netherlands, to which the Allied general would not accede. The military operations consequently went on, and soon acquired a degree of horror hitherto unparalleled even in that long and bloody contest.¹

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¹ Rousset,
ii. 282, 283.
Coxe, v.
13, 16.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
72-74.

The art of countermining, and of counteracting the danger of mines exploding, was then very imperfectly understood, though that of besieging above ground had been brought to the very highest degree of perfection. The soldiers, in consequence, entertained a great and almost superstitious dread of the perils of that subterranean warfare, where prowess and courage were alike unavailing, and the bravest, equally with the most pusillanimous, were liable to be at any moment blown into the air, or smothered under ground, by the explosions of an unseen, and therefore appalling enemy. The Allies were inferior in regular sappers and miners to the besieged, who were singularly well supplied with that important arm of the service. The dangers of this species of service, at all times great, were here immensely aggravated by the extraordinary pains taken to make this subterranean warfare as formidable as possible. The miners frequently met, and fought with those of the enemy ; and sometimes the troops, mistaking friend for foe, killed their fellow-soldiers : sometimes whole companies entered the mines at the very moment when they were ready primed for explosion. They were often inundated with water, suffocated with smoke, or buried alive in cavities, where they were left to perish. Some-

32.
Alarms of
the troops
at the sub-
terranean
warfare.

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¹ Dumont's
Mil. Hist.
ii. 104.

Coxe, v. 15.

times numbers were blown into the air, and their limbs scattered to a distance like burning stones from a volcano. The ordinary soldiers, how brave soever in the field, evinced a repugnance at engaging in this novel and terrific species of warfare: and it was only by the officers personally visiting the trenches in the very hottest of the fire, and offering high rewards to the soldiers who would enter into the mines, that men could be got to venture on the perilous service.¹

33.
Its real
horrors,
Aug. 15-23.

It was not surprising that even the bravest of the Allied troops were appalled at the new and extraordinary dangers which now awaited them, for they were truly of the most formidable description. What rendered them especially so, was, that the perils in a peculiar manner affected the bold and the forward. The first to mount a breach, to effect a lodgment in a horn-work, to penetrate into a mine, was sure to perish. First a hollow rumbling noise was heard, which froze the bravest hearts with horror: a violent rush as of a subterraneous cataract succeeded; and immediately the earth heaved, and whole companies, and even battalions, were scattered in a frightful explosion. On the 15th August, a sally by M. de Surville was bravely repulsed, and the besiegers, pursuing their advantage, effected a lodgment in the outwork: but immediately a mine was sprung, and a hundred and fifty men were blown into the air. In the night between the 16th and 17th, a long and furious conflict took place below ground and in utter darkness between the contending parties, which at length terminated to the advantage of the besiegers.*

* A very striking incident occurred in the siege, which shows to what a height the heroic spirit with which the troops were animated had risen. An officer commanding a detachment was sent by Lord Albemarle to occupy a

On the 20th, M. de Surville caused a wall to be blown up which overhung a sap, and thereby smothered two officers, thirty soldiers, and five miners. On the 23d a mine was discovered, sixty feet long by twenty broad, which would have blown up a whole battalion of Hanoverian troops placed above it ; but while the Allies were in the mine, congratulating themselves on the discovery, a mine below it was suddenly sprung, and all within the upper one were buried in the ruins. On the night of the 25th, three hundred men, posted in a large mine discovered to the Allies by an inhabitant of Tournay, were crushed in a similar manner by the explosion of another mine directly below ; and on the same night, one hundred men posted in the town ditch were suddenly buried under a bastion blown out upon them. In resisting Lottum's attack alone, no less than thirty-eight mines were sprung in twenty-six days, almost all with fatal effect.¹

Great was the dismay which these dreadful and unheard-of disasters produced among the Allied troops. The miners of the confederates not being sufficiently numerous, it was necessary to employ the regular troops to assist in the service ; and many of those who had bravely faced the greatest visible dangers recoiled from the unknown dangers of this subterranean warfare. Such was their reluctance that Marlborough and Eugene visited the trenches in person, themselves braved the

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¹ Dumont's
Hist. Mil.
ii. 104.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
85.

34.
But the
citadel is
at length
taken,
Sept. 3.

certain lunette which had been captured from the enemy ; and though it was concealed from the men, the commander told the officer he had every reason to believe the post was undermined, and that the party would be blown up. Knowing this, he proceeded with perfect calmness to the place of his destination ; and when provisions and wine were served out to the men, he desired them to fill their calashes, and said, " Here is a health to those who die the death of the brave." The mine was immediately after sprung ; but fortunately the explosion failed, and his comrades survived to relate their commander's noble conduct.—DUMONT, ii. 106.

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dangers of the explosions, and offered high rewards to stimulate the ardour of the troops. Eugene employed two hundred miners who had been engaged in the siege of Turin, and who, leading the way, were followed the more readily by the more inexperienced soldiers. At length the resolution and energy of Marlborough and Eugene triumphed over every obstacle. Early on the morning of the 31st August, the white flag was displayed, and a conference took place between the two commanders in the house of the Earl of Albemarle; but the governor having refused to accede to the terms demanded—that the garrison should surrender as prisoners of war—the fire recommenced, and a tremendous discharge from all the batteries took place for the next three days. This compelled the brave de Surville to submit; and Marlborough, in consideration of his gallant defence, permitted the garrison to march out with the honours of war, and return to France, on condition of not serving again till they were exchanged. On September 3d the gates were surrendered; and the entire command of this strong fortress and rich city, which entirely covered Spanish Flanders, was gained by the Allies. The garrison, which was reduced to three thousand men, was conducted to Douai. This dreadful siege proved very destructive to the Allied troops, for five thousand of their number perished during its continuance, by sickness or the sword.¹

¹ Dumont's
Mil. Hist.
ii. 103.
Marlbo-
rough to Mr
Secretary
Boyle, Aug.
31 and Sept.
3, 1709.
Des. iv.
585-588.
Coxe, v.
14-18.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
81, 82.

35.
Vigorous
movements
of Marlbo-
rough to-
wards Mons.

The capture of Tournay was extremely important, not merely because it was a rich and populous city, but gave the Allies the command of a province in French Flanders, remarkable for the fertility of its soil and its numerous manufactures. No sooner was it taken than the Allied generals turned their eyes to Mons, the next

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great fortress on the road to Paris, and which, with Valenciennes, constituted the only remaining strongholds that lay on that line between them and Paris. But it was no easy matter to see how this was to be accomplished, for Villars' lines, which were extremely long, lay between, and Mons could not be reached but by breaking through them at some point. But nothing is impossible to genius and perseverance. The vigilant eyes of Marlborough and Eugene detected the weak point of the French marshal's position, which, so strengthened as to be impregnable behind the Scheldt and the Scarpe, was less formidable behind the Trouille. There accordingly it was resolved to make the attempt to force them. So anxious was Marlborough to hasten operations against Mons that on the 31st August, anticipating the surrender of the citadel of Tournay, he despatched Lord Orkney with all the grenadiers of the army, and twenty squadrons, to surprise St Ghislain, and secure the passage of the Haine. On the 3d, the Prince of Hesse-Cassel was sent after him with four thousand foot and sixty squadrons. Lord Orkney, on arriving on the banks of the Haine, found the passage so strongly guarded that he did not deem it prudent to alarm the enemy, or reveal the real point of attack by attempting to force it. The Prince of Hesse-Cassel, however, was more fortunate. He marched with such extraordinary diligence that he got over forty-nine English miles in fifty-six successive hours—a rapidity of advance, for such a distance, that had never been previously surpassed, though it has been outdone in later times.¹ * By this means he reached the Haine on the

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
90-92.
Coxe, v.
19, 21.
Rousset, ii.
284, 285.

* Mackenzie's brigade, which joined Wellington's army after the battle of Talavera, marched sixty-two English miles in twenty-six hours.—NAPIER,

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36.
Positions
taken by
Marlbo-
rough after
the lines
were passed.

other side of Mons, and surprised the passage near Obourg, at two in the morning of the 6th, and at noon entered the French lines of the Trouille without opposition, the enemy retiring with precipitation as he advanced.

Marlborough was not slow in improving the advantage thus gained by his adventurous lieutenant. He immediately extended his forces over the valley of the Trouille, fixed his headquarters at the abbey of Belian, and with his right occupied in strength the important plateau of Jemappes, which intercepted the communication between Mons and Valenciennes. It was on this height that the famous battle was fought with the French Republicans under Dumourier in 1792—another proof, among the many which history affords, how frequently the crisis of war, at long distances of time from each other, takes place in the same vicinity. By this decisive movement, Marlborough gained an immense advantage;—Mons was now passed, and *invested on the side of France*; and the formidable lines, thirty leagues in length, on which Marshal Villars had been labouring with such assiduity during the two preceding months, were turned, and made of no avail. Immense was the impression produced in France, and over Europe, by this decisive stroke. It shook the confidence of military men in the lines of defence, on which so much reliance had hitherto been placed, and spread a general belief that the Allied generals were invincible, since, with so much ease, and without bloodshed, they had rendered nugatory the boasted defences of the best French marshal.¹

¹ Marlborough to Mr Secretary Boyle, Sept. 7, 1709. Des. iv. 590. Coxe, v. 21, 22. Hist. de Marl. iii. 90-92. Rousset, ii. 285.

ii. 412. And the Russian foot-guards, in the course of the advance to Paris, after the combat at Fère-Champenoise in March 1814, marched forty-eight miles in twenty-six hours.—ALISON'S *Europe*, c. 88, § 37.

While the Prince of Hesse-Cassel, with the advanced guard of the army, gained this brilliant success, Marlborough was rapidly following with the main body in the same direction. The force besieging Tournay crossed the Scheldt at the bridge of that town, and joined the covering force under Eugene. From thence they advanced to Siran, where they were joined by Lord Orkney with his detachment, which had failed in passing the Haine. On the 6th, having learned the success of the Prince of Hesse-Cassel, in turning the enemy's lines, and getting between Mons and France, the Allied generals pushed on with the utmost expedition, and, leaving their army to form the investment of Mons, joined the Prince in the abbey of Belian. Both commanders complimented his Royal Highness highly on the advantages he had gained; but he replied, "The French have deprived me of the glory due to such a compliment, since they have not even waited my arrival." In truth, such had been the celerity and skill of his dispositions that they had rendered resistance hopeless, and achieved success without the necessity of striking a blow. Meanwhile Marshal Boufflers, hearing a battle was imminent, arrived in the camp as a volunteer, to serve under Villars, his junior in military service*—a noble example of disinterested patriotism, which, not less than the justly popular character of that distinguished general, raised the enthusiasm of the French soldiers to the very highest pitch.^{1†} Everything announced a more sanguinary and

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37.

He turns
Villars'
lines, and
gets be-
tween them
and France.

Sept. 6.

¹ Marl.
Des. iv.
588-595.
Coxe, v.
24, 25.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
90-92.
Rousset, ii.
285, 286.

* "Le plus ancien maréchal mandoit à l'autre—' Je vous supplie de me faire savoir si vous approuvez que j'aie l'honneur de me rendre demain près de vous; vous satisferez mon impatience de vous embrasser et de recevoir moi-même vos ordres. Je puis vous assurer qu' aucun de vos aides-de-camp ne les exécutera avec plus d'empressement ni de plaisir que moi.'"—*Boufflers à Villars*, 1st Sept. 1709; *Hist. de Marlborough*, iii. 93.

† A similar incident occurred in the British service, when Sir Henry, now

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38.
Concentra-
tion of the
Allied and
of Villars'
armies,
Sept. 7.

important conflict between the renowned commanders and gallant armies now arrayed on the opposite sides, than had yet taken place since the commencement of the war.

During those rapid and vigorous movements, which entirely turned and broke through his much-vaunted lines of defence, Villars remained with the great body of his forces in a state of inactivity. Aware that he was to be attacked, but ignorant where the blow was likely to fall first, he judged, and perhaps rightly, that it would be hazardous to weaken his lines at any one point by accumulating forces at another. No sooner, however, did he receive intelligence of the march of the Prince of Hesse-Cassel than he broke up from the lines of Douai, now pierced and rendered useless, and, hastily collecting his forces, advanced towards that adventurous commander. His object was either to raise the siege of Mons, or at least prevent it from being entirely invested. For this purpose he made for the openings in the woods, or *trouées*, as they are called, of Louvière and Aulnoit, and drew near the enemy's posts on the Trouille. At two in the morning of the 4th his cavalry approached the front of the Prince's position ; but conceiving the whole Allied army was before him, he did not venture to make an attack at a time when his great superiority of force would have enabled him to do it with every chance of success. The movement of Villars, however, and the general *feu-de-joie* which resounded through the French lines on the arrival of

Lord Hardinge, and Governor-General of India, served as second in command to Sir Hugh Gough, his senior in military rank, but subordinate in station, at the glorious battles of Ferozepore and Sobraon, with the Sikhs. How identical is the noble and heroic spirit in all ages and countries ! It forms a free-masonry throughout the world.

Marshal Boufflers, warned the Allied leaders that a general battle was at hand. The Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene were dining together on the afternoon of the 7th, when intelligence of these events was brought them: they instantly rose from table, and put themselves at the head of their respective divisions of the army; and orders were in consequence given to the whole army to advance at four o'clock on the afternoon of the 7th. A detachment of Eugene's troops was left to watch Mons, the garrison of which consisted only of eleven weak battalions and a regiment of horse, not mustering above five thousand combatants; and the whole remainder of the Allied army, ninety thousand strong, pressed forward in dense masses into the level and marshy plain in the middle of which Mons is situated. They advanced in different columns headed by Marlborough and Eugene; and never was a more magnificent spectacle presented than when the troops, consisting of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, defiled in the finest order from the woods into the plain, and ascended the undulating ground which lies to the south of that town. They arrived at night, and bivouacked in a line stretching along the heights of Quaregnon, near Genly, to the village of Quevy, about three miles in length, and only five distant from the enemy; so that it was evident that a general battle would take place on the following day, unless Villars was prepared to abandon Mons to its fate.¹

The French marshal, however, had no intention of declining the combat. His army was entirely fresh, and in the finest order: it had engaged in no previous operations; whereas a bloody siege, and subsequent fatiguing marches in bad weather, had sensibly weakened the

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¹ Marlborough to Mr Sec. Boyle, Sept. 7/11, 1709. Des. iv. 591, 592. Coxe, v. 25, 26. Hist. de Marl. iii. 93, 94.

39. Composition and strength of the French army.

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strength, though they had not depressed the spirits, of the Allied soldiers. The vast efforts of the French government, joined to the multitude of recruits which the public distress had impelled into the army, had in an extraordinary degree strengthened its ranks. After making provision for all the garrisons and detached posts with which he was charged, Villars could bring into the field no less than one hundred and thirty battalions, and two hundred and sixty squadrons, and all raised to their full complement, mustering sixty-five thousand infantry, and twenty-six thousand horse, with eighty guns—in all, with the artillery, ninety-five thousand combatants. This vast array had the advantages of being almost entirely of one nation, speaking one language, and being animated by one spirit; while the Allied force was a motley assemblage of many different races and nations of men, held together only by the strong tie of military success and confidence in their generals. Both armies were of nearly equal strength; they were under the command of the ablest and most intrepid commanders of their day; the soldiers of both had long acted together, and acquired confidence in each other; and each contained that intermixture of the fire of young with the caution of veteran troops, which affords the happiest augury of military success. It was hard to predict, between such antagonists, to which side the scales of victory would incline.^{1*}

¹ Mém. de Villars, ii. 167-184. Coxe, v. 26-29. Hist. de Marl. iii. 97, 98. Rousset, ii. 285, 286.

The face of the country occupied by the French army,

* The relative force of the two armies was as follows:—

ALLIES.	MEN.	FRENCH AND BAVARIANS.	MEN.
Battalions, 139	} 93,000	Battalions, 130	} 95,000
Squadrons, 252		Squadrons, 260	
Guns, 105		Guns, 80	

—KAUSLER, 769.

soon to be the theatre of the great battle which was approaching, is an irregular plateau, interspersed by woods, intersected by streams, and elevated from a hundred and fifty to two hundred feet above the meadows of the Trouille. Mons and Bavay, the villages of Quevrain and Givry, formed the angular points of this broken surface. Extensive woods on all the principal eminences gave diversity and beauty to the landscape, and, in a military point of view, added much to the strength of the position as defensible ground against an enemy. Near MALPLAQUET, on the west of the ridge, is a small heath, and immediately to the south of it the ground descends by a rapid slope to the Hon, which finds its way to the Trouille, which it joins near Condé, by a circuitous route in the rear of the French position. The streams from Malplaquet to the northward all flow by a gentle slope through steep wooded banks to the Trouille, into which they fall near Mons. The woods on the plateau are the remains of a great natural forest which had formerly covered the whole of these uplands, and out of which the clearings round the villages and hamlets which now exist, have been cut by the hands of laborious industry. Two woods near the summit level of the ground are of a great extent, and deserve particular notice. The first, called the wood of Lanière, stretches from Longueville in a north-easterly direction to Cauchie; the second, named the wood Taisnière, of still larger size, extends from the Chaussée de Bois to the village of Bouson. Between these woods are two openings, or *trouées*, as they are called in the country—the Trouée de la Louvière and the Trouée d'Aulnoit. Generally speaking, the ground occupied by the French, and which was to be the theatre of the battle, may be

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40.

Description
of the field
of battle.

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¹ Coxe, v.
29, 30.

described as a rough and woody natural barrier, stretching across the high plateau which separates the Haine and the Trouille, and pervious only by the two openings of Louvière and Aulnoit, both of which were in a very great degree susceptible of defence.^{1*}

41.
Noble force
on both
sides.

The Allied army consisted of 139 battalions and 252 squadrons, with 105 guns, mustering 93,000 combatants. It was divided into two corps, the one under the immediate direction of Marlborough, consisting of 104 battalions and 163 squadrons; the other, under that of Eugene, mustered 66 battalions and 108 squadrons. The detachments at the siege of Mons and at Tournay reduced the force in the field to the amount above stated. Eugene had the post of honour on the right, Marlborough on the left. The two armies, therefore, were as nearly as possible equal in point of military strength — a slight numerical superiority on the part of the French being compensated by a superiority of twenty-five guns on that of the Allies. Among the French nobles present at the battle were no less than twelve who were afterwards marshals of France.† The son of James II., under the name of the Chevalier de St George, who combined the graces of youth with the hereditary valour of his race, was there; St Hilaire and Folard, whose works afterwards threw such light on military science, were to be found in its ranks. The Garde-du-Corps, Mousquetaires Gris, Grenadiers-à-Cheval, French, Swiss, and Bavarian guards,² as well

² Mém. de
Villars, ii.
280. Coxe,
v. 32, 33.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
49.

* The author has passed over the ground, and can attest the accuracy of the description here given.

† Viz., Artagnan, Maréchal de Montesquieu; De Guiche, Maréchal de Grammont; Puysegur, Montmorenci, Coigny, Broglie, Chaulnes, Nangis, Isenghien, Duras, Houdancourt, and Sanneterre. The monarchy never sent forth a nobler array.

as the Irish Brigade, stood among the combatants. The Montmorencies were there, and the De Guiches, the De Grammonts and De Coignys. The reverses of Louis had called forth the flower of the nobility, as well as the last reserves of the monarchy.

Early on the morning of the 9th, Marlborough and Eugene were on the look-out at the Mill of Sart, with a strong escort, consisting of thirty squadrons of horse. From the reports brought in, it was soon ascertained that the whole forces of the French were marching towards the plain of Malplaquet, on the west of the plateau, and that Villars himself was occupying the woods of Lanière and Taisnière. His headquarters were at Blagnies, in the rear of the centre. The two armies were now only a league and a half separate, and Marlborough and Eugene were clear for immediately attacking the enemy, before they could add to the natural strength of their position by intrenchments. But the Dutch deputies, Hooft and Goslinga, interfered, as they had done on a similar occasion between Wavre and Waterloo, and strongly insisted on the risk which would be run if a general battle were hazarded with an enemy so strongly posted. "How many men," said they, "shall we sacrifice before we can force an enemy so strongly intrenched, who will fight from one post to another, and if he is worsted can retire without difficulty or design? whereas we, in case of defeat, shall be cut up by the garrisons of Maubeuge, Condé, Mons, and Valenciennes."¹

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42.
Preparatory
movements
on both
sides, and
interference
of the
Dutch de-
puties,
Sept. 9.

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
98, 99.
Rousset, ii.

Aware, from long experience, that the Dutch deputies would oppose whatever he appeared eagerly to insist for, Marlborough gave his opinion with moderation in favour of an immediate attack, without waiting for the

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43.
Opinions
of Marlbo-
rough and
Eugene in
the council
of war,
Sept. 9.

troops, consisting of twenty-six battalions, which would arrive the day following from the lines before Tournay. Eugene spoke with more warmth, but still counselled a delay in the attack till the troops came up from Tournay. "Your prudence," said he, addressing the Dutch deputies, "is excessive. The enemy before you is not so strong as he whom you have often defeated. His best soldiers have perished at Hochstedt, at Cassano, at Ramilies, at Turin, at Oudenarde; there are not twenty thousand men in his army who are not new levies. The multitude of his intrenchments is a proof of his weakness, and of the little confidence which the generals have in their troops. That army is the last effort of exhausted France; let us dare to attack it; we shall disperse it, and the enemy of Europe will find himself constrained to take the law from our hands. Our soldiers, who are animated by the recollection of a long series of successes, await with impatience the result of this council; they will regard it as an insult if the result is not conformable to their wishes. Our true wisdom is to reckon confidently on their valour, which during seven years has never disappointed us. I may perhaps add that they are led by the same chief, who will know how to guide them on the path of victory, which is not altogether unknown to them."¹

¹ Rousset,
ii. 286.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
99, 100.

44.
Result of
these deli-
berations.

The result of these deliberations was a middle course, which, as usual in such cases, proved in the end the most perilous which could have been adopted. It was resolved to fight rather than abandon the siege of Mons, and attack the enemy if he did not himself become the assailant, but to delay the conflict till the reinforcement of twenty-six battalions came up from Tournay, and till St Ghislain, which commanded a passage over the Haine,

was taken. This was done next day, the fort being carried by escalade, and its garrison of two hundred men made prisoners; and on the day following all the reserves from Tournay came up. But these advantages, which in themselves were not inconsiderable, were dearly purchased by the time which Villars gained for strengthening his position. Instead of pushing on to attack the Allies, as Marlborough and Eugene had expected, in order to raise the siege of Mons, that able commander employed himself with the utmost skill and vigour in throwing up intrenchments in every part of his position. He did this with such judgment and energy, and took such skilful advantage of all the defences which the ground afforded, that by the morning of the 11th the position was wellnigh impregnable, and unquestionably would have proved so to any other troops but those of Eugene and Marlborough.¹

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1709.

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
100, 101.
Coxe, v.
34, 35.

The nature of the ground singularly favoured his efforts. The heights he occupied, plentifully interspersed with woods and eminences, formed a concave semicircle, the artillery from which enfiladed on all sides the little plain of Malplaquet, so as to render it, in Dumont's words, "une trouée d'enfer," which could not be approached without destruction. Around this semicircle, redoubts, palisades, abattis, and stockades, were disposed with such skill and judgment, that, literally speaking, there was not a single inequality of ground (and there were many) which was not turned to good account. The two *trouées* or openings, in particular, already mentioned, by which it was foreseen the Allies would endeavour to force an entrance, were so enfiladed by cross batteries as to be wellnigh unassailable. Twenty pieces of artillery were placed on

45.
Villars fortifies his position.

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¹ Rousset,
ii. 286.
Dumont's
Mil. Hist.
ii. 381-386.
Kausler,
770. Coxe,
v. 34-37.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
105-107.

46.
Plan of at-
tack by the
Allied gene-
rals, Sept.
10.

a redoubt situated on an eminence near the centre of the field ; the remainder were arranged along the field-works, constructed along the lines. These fieldworks and intrenchments were so lofty and regular, that it appeared scarcely possible even for the bravest troops to surmount them ; and the French army, posted on their summit or behind their enclosures, seemed rather in a regular fortress than in a field of battle. Half the army laboured at these works without a moment's intermission during the whole of the 9th and 10th, while the other were under arms, ready to repel any attack which might be hazarded. With such vigour were the operations conducted, that by the night of the 10th the position was deemed impregnable.¹

The Allied forces passed these two days in inactivity, awaiting the arrival of the reinforcements from Tournay which the council of war had deemed indispensable to the commencement of operations. Meanwhile Marlborough and Eugene had repeatedly reconnoitred the enemy's position, and were fully aware of its growing strength. Despairing of openly forcing such formidable lines, defended by an army so numerous and gallant, they resolved to combine their first attack with a powerful demonstration in rear. With this view, the rear-guard, of nineteen battalions and ten squadrons, which was coming up from Tournay under General Withers, received orders not to join the main body of the army, but, stopping short at St Ghislain, to cross the Haine there, and, traversing the wood of Blangies by a country road, to assail the extreme left of the enemy at the farm of La Folie, when the combat had been seriously begun in front. Baron Schulemberg was to attack the left flank of the intrenchments in the wood of Taisnière with forty

of Eugene's battalions, supported by forty pieces of cannon, so placed that their shot reached every part of the wood; while Count Lottum was to assail their right flank with twenty-two battalions. To distract the enemy's attention, other attacks were directed along the whole line; but the main effort was to be made by Eugene's corps on the wood of Taisnière, and it was from the co-operation of the attacks of Lottum and Withers on its flanks that decisive success was expected. All the corps had reached their respective points of destination on the evening of the 10th. Eugene and Schulemberg were grouped near Sart, in four lines, in front of Taisnière; the Allied position extended from Aulnois on the left to Frameries on the right; and the men lay down to sleep, anxiously awaiting the dawn of the eventful morrow.¹

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¹ Marl.
Gen. Or-
ders, Sept.
10, 1709.
Des. v. 617.
Kausler,
784, 785.
Coxe, v.
40-44.

At three in the morning of the 11th, divine service was performed with the utmost decorum at the head of every regiment, and listened to by the soldiers, after the example of their chief, with the most devout attention. The utmost regularity pervaded the ranks, as, with a slow but steady step, the troops marched from their bivouacs to the posts assigned them in the field. The awful nature of the occasion, the momentous interests at stake, the uncertainty who might survive to the close of the day, the protracted struggle soon to be brought to a decisive issue, had banished all lighter feelings, and impressed a noble character on that impressive solemnity. A thick fog overspread the field, under cover of which the troops marched to their appointed stations: the guns were brought forward to the grand battery in the centre, which was protected on either side by an *épaulette* to prevent an enfilade. No sooner did the French

47.
Feelings of
the soldiers
on both
sides, Sep-
tember 11.

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outposts give notice that the Allies were preparing for an attack than the whole army stood to their arms, and all the working-parties, who were still toiling in the trenches, cast aside their tools, and joyfully resumed their places in the ranks. Never, since the commencement of the war, had the spirit of the French soldiers been so high, or had so enthusiastic a feeling been infused into every bosom. They looked forward with confidence to regaining, under their beloved commander, Marshal Villars, the laurels which had been withered in eight successive campaigns, and arresting the flood of conquest which threatened to overwhelm their country. When the general mounted his horse at seven, loud cries of "Vive le Roi!" "Vive le Maréchal de Villars!" burst from their ranks. He himself took the command of the left, giving the post of honour on the right, in courtesy, to Marshal Boufflers. On the Allied side, enthusiasm was not so loudly expressed, but confidence was not the less strongly felt. It was the anniversary of the glorious victory of the Zenta, gained on September 11, 1697, by Prince Eugene over 150,000 Turks. The soldiers all knew this, and relied with reason on the tried and splendid abilities of their chiefs, on their own experienced constancy and success in the field. They had the confidence of veteran soldiers, who had long fought and conquered together. In allusion to the numerous fieldworks before them, which almost concealed the enemy's ranks from their view, the sarcastic expression passed through the ranks, "We are again about to make war on moles." The fog still lingered on the ground, so as to prevent the gunners seeing to take aim; but at half-past seven it cleared up, the sun broke forth with uncommon brilliancy,¹ and immediately the

¹ Ledyard, ii. 172-180.
Coxe, v. 45-47.
Hist. de Marl. iii. 105, 106.

fire commenced with the utmost vigour from the artillery on both sides.

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48.
Commence-
ment of the
battle.

For about half-an-hour the cannon continued to thunder, so as to reach every part of the field of battle with their balls, when Marlborough moved forward his troops in *échelon*, the left in front, in order to commence his projected attack on the French centre and left. The Dutch, who were on the left, agreeably to the orders they had received, which were merely to threaten and not make a real attack for half-an-hour, halted when within range of grape, and a violent cannonade was merely exchanged on both sides; but Count Lottum, who commanded the centre of twenty-two battalions, continued to press on, regardless of the storm of shot and grape with which he was assailed, and when well into the enemy's line he brought up his left shoulders, and in three lines attacked the right of the wood of Taisnière. Schulemberg, at the same time, with his forty battalions to the right of Lottum, advanced against the wood of Taisnière in front; while Lord Orkney, with his fifteen battalions, as Lottum's men inclined to the right, marched straight forward to the ground they had occupied, and menaced the intrenchment before him in the opening. Eugene, who was with Schulemberg's men, advanced without firing a shot, though suffering dreadfully from grape, till within pistol-shot of the batteries. They were there, however, received by so terrible a discharge of all arms from the intrenchments—the French soldiers laying their pieces deliberately over the parapet, and taking aim within twenty yards of their opponents—that they recoiled above two hundred yards, and were only brought back to the charge by the heroic efforts of Eugene, who

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¹ Kausler,
786. Coxe,
v. 44-46.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
107, 108.
Rousset,
i. 94.

exposed his person in the very front of the line. During this conflict three battalions under Gauvain, brought up from the blockade of Mons, stole unperceived, amidst the tumult in front, into the north-eastern angle of the wood of Taisnière, and were making some progress, when they were met by three battalions of French troops, and a vehement fire of musketry soon rang in the recesses of the wood.¹

49.
Marlbo-
rough, after
a desperate
conflict,
carries the
wood of
Taisnière.

Meanwhile, Marlborough in person led on d'Auvergne's cavalry in support of Lottum's men, who speedily were engaged in a most terrific conflict. They bore without flinching the fire of the French brigade *du Roi*, which manned the opposite works, and, crossing a ravine and small morass which had been deemed impassable, rushed with fixed bayonets, and the most determined resolution, right against the intrenchment. So vehement was the onset, so impetuous the rush, that some of the leading files actually reached the summit of the parapet, and those behind pushing vehemently on, the redoubt was carried amidst deafening cheers. But Villars was directly in its rear, and he immediately led up in person a brigade in the finest order, which expelled the assailants at the point of the bayonet, and regained the work. Marlborough upon this charged at the head of d'Auvergne's cavalry; and that gallant body of men, three thousand strong, dashed forward, and entered the intrenchments, which were at the same time turned on their right, and surrounded by some of Lottum's battalions. While this desperate conflict was going on in front and flank of the wood, Withers, with his corps brought up from Tournay, was silently, and with great caution, entering the wood on the side of La Folie,² and had already made considerable progress before any great

² Rousset,
i. 94, 95.
Kausler,
786, 787.
Coxe, v.
48-50.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
109, 110.

efforts were made to expel them. The advance of this corps in his rear rendered it impossible for Villars any longer to maintain the advanced line of works in the front of the wood ; it was therefore abandoned, but slowly, and in admirable order—the troops retiring through the trees to the second line of works in their rear, which they prepared to defend to the last extremity.

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While this bloody conflict was raging in and around the wood of Taisnière, the half-hour during which the Prince of Orange had been directed to suspend his attack had elapsed, and that gallant chief, impatient of inactivity when the battle was raging with such fury on his right, resolved to move forward in good earnest. His troops, almost all auxiliaries in the service of Holland, were of various nations, but all veterans of the most determined bravery. The Scotch brigade, led on by the Marquis of Tullibardine, headed the column on the left ; to their right were the Dutch, under Spaar and Oxenstiern ; while the Prince of Hesse-Cassel, with twenty-one squadrons, was in reserve to support and follow the infantry into the works, when an opening was made. On the word “march” being given, the troops of these various nations, with rival courage, advanced to the attack. The Scotch Highlanders, headed by the gallant Tullibardine,* eldest son of the Duke of Athole, rushed impetuously forward to the assault despite a tremendous fire of grape and musketry which issued from the works, and succeeded in reaching the top of the intrenchment. A second line of intrenchments was carried in like manner ; and if an adequate reserve had

50.
Bloody re-
pulse of the
Prince of
Orange on
the left.

* The regiments of Tullibardine and Hepburn were almost all Athole Highlanders.

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been at hand to support them, this part of the line would have been secured, and the battle gained. But the assailants were too weak, the enemy too strong, for immediate success. The Prince of Orange had no reserve ; all his troops had hurried to the assault : he had only forty battalions to the French seventy opposed to them. But before they could deploy they were charged by the French infantry in close order, and driven out of the intrenchments. Tullibardine met a glorious death in the redoubt he had won. Equally gallant was the assault, and unfortunate in the end the result, of the Prince of Orange's attack on the right of the left towards the French centre. There, too, by a vehement rush, the intrenchment was carried ; but the men which surmounted it had no sooner penetrated it than they were attacked by Boufflers, at the head of fresh troops in close order in front, while a powerful battery opened with grape on their flank. This double attack proved irresistible ; the assailants were pushed out of the works with dreadful slaughter. Spaar lay dead on the spot ; Hamilton was carried off wounded.¹

¹ Kausler, 788. Coxe, v. 51-53. Rousset, i. 94, 95.

51.
 Heroic but ineffectual efforts of the Prince of Orange to restore the combat.

Seeing his men recoil, the Prince of Orange seized a standard, and advancing alone to the slope of the intrenchment, said aloud, " Follow me, my friends ; here is your post." But it was all in vain : it was no longer possible to force the enemy's works. Boufflers' men from the French second line had now closed up with the first, which lined the works, and a dense mass of bayonets, six deep, bristled at their summit behind the embrasures of the guns. A dreadful rolling fire issued from them ; their position could be marked by the ceaseless line of flame, even through the volumes of smoke which enveloped them on all sides ; and at length,

after displaying the most heroic valour, the Prince of Orange was obliged to draw off his men, with the loss of three thousand killed, and twice that number wounded. Instantly the brigade of Navarre issued with loud shouts out of the intrenchments. Several Dutch battalions were driven back, and some colours, with an advanced battery, fell into the enemy's hands. Boufflers supported this sally by his *grenadiers-à-cheval*; but the Dutch infantry, even in the moment of repulse, presented so steady a front that they overawed their pursuers. As they slowly retired, discharging volleys all the way, the Prince of Hesse-Cassel came up with his well-appointed squadrons on the other side, and, after a short struggle, drove the French back into their works.¹

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¹ Ledyard,
ii. 182-185.
Coxe, v. 55.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
110, 111.

Hearing that matters were in this precarious state on the left, Marlborough galloped from the right centre, accompanied by his staff, where Lottum's infantry and d'Auvergne's horse had gained such important advantages. Matters ere long became so alarming that Eugene also followed in the same direction. The attack on the left was renewed with the aid of four battalions of Hanoverians under general Rantzau, and the intrenchment in front of them carried; but after they got in, the assailants were again mowed down by grape-shot from the works behind, and, charged by Steckomberg, driven out with dreadful loss. All the Hanoverian officers, except three, were killed or wounded; and the French, in this terrible struggle, also sustained a grievous loss, including Steckomberg, who here closed his long and honourable career. On his way along the rear of the line the English general had at once ocular demonstration of the terrible reverse which had been experienced, and of the heroic spirit with which his troops

52.
Marlbo-
rough has-
tens to the
spot, and
restores the
battle.

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were animated ; for he saw the shattered remains of the Dutch infantry reluctantly measuring back their steps beyond the reach of grape-shot, and numbers of the wounded Dutch and Hanoverians, whose hurts had just been bound up by the surgeons, again hastening to the front, to join their comrades—though some, faint from the loss of blood, yet tottered under the weight of their muskets. The reserves were hastily directed to the menaced front, and by their aid the combat was in some degree restored in that quarter ; while Marlborough and Eugene laboured to persuade the Prince of Orange, who was burning with anxiety at all hazards to renew the attack, that his operations were only intended as a feint, and that the real effort was to be made on the right, where considerable progress had already been made.¹

¹ Kausler, 789, 790.
Coxe, v. 56, 57.
Hist. de Marl. iii. 111, 112.
Rousset, i. 95.

53.
A vigorous attack of Villars on the right weakens his centre, which Marlborough prepares to attack.

Order was hardly restored in this quarter when intelligence arrived from the right that the enemy were assuming the initiative in the wood of Taisnière, and were pressing hard upon the troops both at La Folie and in front of the wood. In fact, Villars, alarmed at the progress of the enemy on his left in the wood, had drawn considerable reinforcements from his centre, and sent them to the threatened quarter. Marlborough instantly saw the advantage which this weakening of the enemy's centre was likely to give him. While he hastened back, therefore, with all imaginable expedition to the right, to arrest the progress of the enemy in that quarter, he directed Lord Orkney to advance, supported by a powerful body of horse on each flank, directly in at the opening between the two woods, and if possible force the enemy's intrenchments in the centre, now stripped of their principal defenders. These

dispositions, adopted on the spur of the moment, and instantly acted upon, proved entirely successful. Eugene galloped to the extreme right, and renewed the attack with Schulemberg's men, while Withers again pressed on the rear of the wood near La Folie. So vigorous was the onset, that the Allies gained ground on both sides of the wood ; and Villars, hastening up with the French guards to restore the combat near La Folie, received a wound in the knee, when gallantly heading a charge of bayonets, which obliged him to quit the field. Unable any longer to sit on horseback, he was placed at his earnest desire in a chair, that he might see the battle, and continue in the field ; but the pain of the wound and loss of blood soon became such that he fainted, and was carried senseless to Quesnoy. Eugene also was wounded on the head while rallying his men, and leading them gallantly to the charge. His attendants pressed him to retire, that the wound might be dressed ; but he replied, " If I am fated to die here, to what purpose dress the wound ? If I survive, it will be time enough in the evening." With these words he advanced again to the head of the line ; and the troops, animated by the heroism of their beloved general, who pressed on though the blood was streaming over his shoulders, followed with such impetuosity that the works were carried, and the victors re-entered the wood pell-mell with the broken enemy.¹

In the centre still more decisive advantages were gained. Lord Orkney there made the attack with such vigour that the intrenchments, now not adequately manned, were at once carried ; and the horse, following rapidly on the traces of the foot-soldiers, broke through at the openings between the works, and spread them-

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¹ Ledyard,
ii. 289-291.
Kausler,
789. Hist.
de Marl.
iii. 112-114.
Coxe, v.
56, 57.
Rousset, i.
93, 94.

^{54.}
Decisive
attack by
Lord Ork-
ney on the
centre.

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selves over the plain, cutting down the fugitives in every direction. Meanwhile the guns on the summit of the works which had been carried wheeled round, opened a tremendous fire on the dense masses of the French in their rear, who had no defence against the fire of intrenchments by which they expected to be protected. Confusion, accordingly, prevailed in the rear ; the retiring infantry got mingled with the reserve cavalry, and the grape-shot fell with unerring effect on both. Marlborough, upon seeing this advantage, instantly gave the grand battery of forty cannon in the Allied centre orders to advance. With the utmost rapidity the guns were limbered up, and moving on at a quick trot. They soon passed the intrenchments in the centre, and, facing to the right and left, opened a tremendous fire of canister and grape on the dense masses of the French cavalry which stood in the rear of the infantry, who were almost all in front among the works. These noble troops, however, bore up gallantly against the storm, and even charged the Allied horse before they had time to form within the lines ; but they were unable to make any impression, and retired from the attack sorely shattered by the Allied artillery.¹

¹ Kausler, 789. Coxe, v. 59, 60. Rousset, i. 95, 96. Hist. de Marl. iii. 114-116.

55.
Admirable efforts of Boufflers to regain the day.

The battle was now gained. Villars' position, how strong and gallantly defended soever, was no longer tenable. Pierced through in the centre, with a formidable enemy's battery on either side thundering on the reserve squadrons, in the very heart of his line, and turned and menaced with rout on the left, it was no longer possible to keep the field. Boufflers, upon whom, in the absence of Villars in consequence of his wound, the direction of affairs had devolved, accordingly prepared for a retreat ; and he conducted it with consum-

mate skill as well as the most undaunted firmness. Collecting a body of two thousand chosen horse yet fresh, consisting of the *élite* of the Horse-Guards and Garde-du-Corps, he charged the Allied horse which had penetrated into the centre, at this time much blown by its severe fatigues in the preceding part of the day. The most desperate cavalry action of the war ensued, and for some time was very doubtful. Boufflers, after a few words of encouragement, himself charged at the head of the Maison-du-Roi and gendarmerie. The shock was irresistible: the Allied cavalry were worsted, and driven back to the entrance of the intrenchments; but all the efforts of this noble body of horsemen were shattered against Orkney's infantry, which, posted on the reverse of the works they had won, poured in, when charged, so close and destructive a fire, that half of the gallant cavaliers were stretched on the plain, and the remainder were forced to make a precipitate retreat.¹

Still the indefatigable Boufflers made another effort. Drawing a large body of infantry from the works on his extreme right, which had been little engaged, he marched them to the left, and, re-forming his squadrons again, advanced to the charge. The brave Auvergne met them at the entrance of the works, and six times, in the desperate strife which ensued, were the French and Allied horse alternately driven back by each other's prowess. But Marlborough no sooner saw this than he charged the Garde-du-Corps with a body of English horse which he himself led on, and drove them back; while the infantry "staggered and reeled, like a sinking ship," under the terrific fire of the Allied guns, which had penetrated the centre. The whole of Eugene's cavalry, which had passed at full gallop in the rear

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¹ Hist. de
Marib. iii.
114, 115.
Rousset, i.
96. Coxe,
v. 60, 61.
Kausler,
790.

56.
Terrible
cavalry
action.

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¹ Coxe, v.
61, 62.
Rousset,
i. 96. Hist.
de Marlb.
iii. 115.

57.
Boufflers'
able and
orderly
retreat.

² Marlbo-
rough to Mr
Sec. Boyle,
Sept. 11,
1709. Des.
v. 562, 598.
Coxe, v.
62, 63.
Rousset, i.
96, 97.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
115, 116.

of the Duke's right wing, came up and supported the English general in this decisive onset. By their united efforts the French horse were finally driven back behind the rivulet called Camp Perdu. At the same time the Prince of Orange and the Prince of Hesse-Cassel, perceiving that the intrenchments before them were stript of great part of their defenders, renewed the attack: in ten minutes these works were carried; and a tremendous shout, heard along the whole line, announced that the whole right of the position had fallen into the hands of the Allies.¹

In these desperate circumstances Boufflers saw that further resistance was hopeless, and he and his brave troops did all that skill or courage could to arrest the progress of the victors, and withdraw from the field without any additional losses. Forming his troops into three great masses, with the cavalry which had suffered least in the rear, he slowly, and in perfect regularity, commenced his retreat in the direction of Bavai. D'Artagnan, who for his conduct in the battle was made Marshal Montesquieu, marched off in close column through the woods. Puysegur, with fifty battalions, moved direct from the French left on Bavai; Boufflers himself retired by Taisnière and Luxembourg, covering the rear with the cavalry. Beyond the woods, on the plain in front of Bavai, the infantry and cavalry rejoined, and after halting to collect the stragglers, and break down the bridges, passed the Hon, in the vicinity of that town. The Pretender, who was with the rear-guard, showed, in retiring from a field so fatal to his house, the hereditary valour of his race.² The Allies had suffered so much, and were so completely exhausted by the fatigue of this bloody and protracted battle, that

they gave them very little molestation. Contenting themselves with pursuing as far as the heath of Malplaquet, and the level ground around Taisnière, they halted, and the men lay down to sleep. Meanwhile the French, in the best order, but in deep dejection, continued their retreat, still in three columns; and after crossing the Hon in their rear, reunited below Quesnoy and Valenciennes, about twelve miles from the field of battle.

Such was the desperate battle of Malplaquet, the most bloody and obstinately contested which had yet occurred in the war, and in which it is hard to say to which of the gallant antagonists the palm of valour and heroism is to be given. The victory was unquestionably gained by the Allies, since they forced the enemy's position, drove them to a considerable distance from the field of battle, and prevented the raising of the siege of Mons, the object for which both parties fought. The valour they displayed had extorted the admiration of their gallant and generous enemies.* The Allied troops took fourteen guns and twenty-five standards, among which was the "Cornette Blanche," the most honoured of the ensigns of the light cavalry of France; but Louis XIV. was with reason consoled for the loss of these trophies by thirty-two standards, chiefly Dutch, which his troops brought away from this desperate passage of arms. Both Eugene and Marlborough exposed

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58.
Results of
the battle
to the
Allies.

* "The Eugenes and Marlboroughs ought to be well satisfied with us during that day; since till then they had not met with resistance worthy of them. They may now say with justice that nothing can stand before them; and indeed what shall be able to stay the rapid progress of these heroes, if an army of one hundred thousand men of the best troops, strongly posted between two woods, trebly intrenched, and performing their duty as well as any brave men could do, were not able to stop them one day? Will you not, then, own with me that they surpass all the heroes of former ages?"—*Letter of a French Officer who fought at Malplaquet*; COXE, v. 65.

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themselves more constantly than they had ever done in any former action ; and cordial as had been their understanding on all previous occasions, it was generally observed that on this they seemed animated only by a generous emulation which should most aid and support the other. On the other hand, these advantages had been purchased at an enormous sacrifice, and never since the commencement of the contest had the scales hung so even between the contending parties. In truth, the battle of Malplaquet was a desperate duel between France and England, in which the whole strength of each nation was put forth, and the successful result was rather owing to the superior talent of the English general, and the unconquerable resolution he had communicated to his followers, than to any superiority either of military skill or national resources enjoyed by the victorious party. Nothing had occurred like it since Azincour ; nothing occurred like it again till Waterloo. Blenheim itself was not nearly so hard fought. The Allies lost, killed in the infantry alone, 5544 ; wounded and missing, 12,706—in all, 18,250—of whom 286 were officers killed, and 762 wounded. Including the casualties in the cavalry and artillery, their total loss was not less than 20,000 men, or nearly a fifth of the number engaged.¹

¹ Kausler, 791. Coxe, v. 64. Hist. de Marl. iii. 126, 127. Rousset, i. 97.

59.
Loss of the French, and humanity of Marlborough.

The French loss, though they were worsted in the fight, was less considerable : it did not exceed fourteen thousand men—an unusual circumstance with a beaten army, but easily accounted for, if the formidable nature of the intrenchments which the Allies had to storm in the first part of the action is taken into consideration. In proportion to the numbers engaged, the loss to the victors was not, however, nearly so great as at Water-

loo.* Then was seen the prophetic wisdom with which Marlborough had so strongly urged upon the British government the propriety of augmenting the Allied force at the commencement of the campaign. But for these, the campaign would have been indecisive, or terminated in misfortune. With the additional troops he so strongly pleaded for, it would have terminated in a decisive victory, and Malplaquet had been Waterloo. Villars wrote with truth to the French king after the battle, in the words of Pyrrhus, "If God vouchsafes to our enemies another such battle, your Majesty may consider your enemies as destroyed."† Few prisoners—not above five hundred—were made on the field; but the woods and intrenchments were filled with wounded French, above three thousand in number, the whole of whom fell into the hands of the Allies, and those who survived, about fifteen hundred, augmented the number of the prisoners. These Marlborough, with characteristic humanity, proposed to Villars to remove to the French headquarters, on condition of their being considered prisoners of war—an offer which that general thankfully accepted. A solemn thanksgiving was read in all the regiments of the army two days after the battle, after which the soldiers of both armies joined in removing the wounded French, on two hundred wagons, to the French camp.¹

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¹ Marlborough to Mr Sec. Boyle, Sept. 16, 1709; and to Marshal Villars, Sept. 13, 1709. Des. v. 596-599. Coxe, v. 64. Hist. de Marl. iii. 126, 127.

* At Waterloo, there were 69,686 men in Wellington's army, and the loss was 22,469, or one in three nearly; at Malplaquet, it was one in five; at Talavera, one in four—5000 being killed and wounded out of 19,800 engaged.—SIBORNE'S *Waterloo*, ii. 352, 519.

† "Si Dieu nous fait la grâce de perdre encore une pareille bataille, votre Majesté peut compter que les ennemis sont détruits. Enfin, comme me le manda M. de Voisin, ce qui avoit paru une bataille perdue, devint une victoire glorieuse après qu'on en eut connu les circonstances, puisque nous ne perdîmes pas six mille hommes."—*Villars au Roi de France*, Sept. 14, 1709; *Mém. de Villars*, ii. 197.

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Thus, after the conclusion of one of the bloodiest fights recorded in modern history, the first acts of the victors were in raising the voice of thanksgiving, and doing deeds of mercy.

60.
Distin-
guished of-
ficers killed
and wound-
ed on both
sides.

Both armies, in addition to the prodigious number of killed and wounded of the common soldiers, had to lament a very great and melancholy list of casualties among the superior officers. On the side of the Allies, General Baron Spaar, Count Oxenstiern, Generals Wick, Tittau, Goor, Lallo, and Lord Tullibardine, were killed; Prince Eugene, Lieutenant-Generals Spaar and Webb, Major-Generals Waskerback and Hamilton, Brigadiers Cronstrom and May, and Colonel Sir John Prendergast were wounded. On the French side, Boufflers, like Marlborough, miraculously escaped, though they both exposed their persons in the very highest degree. But Villars was severely wounded in the knee, and the Marquis de Chemerault, Baron Pullaviani, Count de Beuil, Chevalier D'Ervy, the Marquis de Charost, Counts Moncart, D'Aubrey, and Colonel de la Larn of the guards, were slain; the young Pretender, the Duke de Guiche, the Duke de St Agnan, the Marquis de Tele, the Marquis de Gondrin, were wounded. The enumeration of these names carries us back to the days when the nobility of modern Europe arose from the exploits of its armed knights; and proves how truly the great families of France still served their country with their swords, and shed their best blood in its defence.¹

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
127, 128.
Coxe, v.
65, 66.

The dreadful loss sustained by the Dutch troops in this bloody battle has caused a very unjust imputation to be cast on the Prince of Orange, who commanded them, as having attacked without orders, and impru-

dently converted a feigned attack into a real one. This has no foundation in truth : the orders of the Prince of Orange, as of the other generals of the line, were precise—to attack the intrenchments in front of his position.* He did so with the most heroic valour ; had he done so with success, his daring would have been lauded to the skies as that of the bravest and most skilful of generals. The result is not always the test of the wisdom of previous measures : when fortuitous circumstances have interfered to prevent its natural result, it is the first duty of history to award the meed of justice. The carnage of the Dutch troops is no imputation on the conduct of the Prince of Orange ; what it really proves is the wisdom of the Duke of Marlborough, who so earnestly counselled an attack on the 9th before the French marshal had reached the openings of the woods, or strengthened his position by intrenchments.¹

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61.

Blame unjustly thrown on the Prince of Orange in this battle.

¹ Rousset, i. 92-94.

The young Maurice de Saxe, who was present in the battle under the Duke of Marlborough, and afterwards became so celebrated as Marshal Saxe, has left the following observations in his *Reveries* on this battle :—" If, in place of shutting the French troops up in bad intrenchments, Villars had contented himself with drawing

62.
Reflections of Marshal Saxe on this battle.

* "DISPOSITIONS POUR L'ATTAQUE DE L'AILE GAUCHE.

" 1. Toute l'infanterie Hollandaise, avec celle qui vient encore du siège, sera destinée pour cette attaque, et elle se fera de la manière suivante.

" 2. L'attaque dans le fond du bois se fera par autant de bataillons que le terrain pourra contenir, disposés en trois ou quatre lignes. Les généraux auront soin que ces lignes ne soient pas trop près l'une de l'autre, et qu'il ait des intervalles, tels qu'un bataillon y puisse passer pour relever ou soutenir les attaques.

" 3. Quand l'infanterie aura chassé celle des ennemis hors du bois et des hayes, elle n'entrera pas dans la plaine, mais elle se postera aux derniers hayes ou fosses ; et les généraux auront soin de faire faire des ouvertures pour que la cavalerie puisse entrer dans la plaine pour se former et soutenir l'attaque de l'infanterie dans la dite plaine."—*Rousset*, i. 92, 93.

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abbatis from the three woods opposite the entrances, and put in those entrances three redoubts, I think affairs would have turned differently. What would the Allies have done? Would they have ventured to attack three redoubts, defended each by several brigades? Had they done so, I doubt if they would have come well out of the affair. It is the nature of the French nation to excel in attack. When, therefore, a general has reason to distrust the grand order which is generally observed in great battles, or the exact discipline of his troops, and when the attack is to be made in detail and by brigades, he will find it for his interest with the French troops to do so. The valour and fire which animates that nation has never failed them; and from the days of Julius Cæsar, who notices it in his *Commentaries*, I know of no instance in which they have not well fastened on any enemy who presented himself. Their first shock is terrible; nothing is wanting but opportunity for renewing it under favourable circumstances. Nothing is so fit for doing so as these redoubts; you constantly feed them with fresh troops, to attack in their turn the enemy who have attacked and been repulsed. Nothing occasions such fear and hesitation in an enemy; for while he attacks, he is constantly in dread of being attacked in flank; and our troops would make such attacks with the better heart, that they would feel assured that their retreat was secured, and that the enemy would not venture to pursue into the cross fire of their redoubts. What would have happened at Malplaquet, if Marshal Villars had kept in hand the largest part of his army, and had only had to deal with the half of that of the Allies, who had had the kindness to engage in the combat in such a way that it was separated by a wood,

and could not communicate with the remainder? The rear of the French army would, in such an operation, have been secured. It seems to me that the Marshal might have levelled his intrenchments on the approach of the Allies, and given battle in the order I have proposed. A counter-march to the right would have done the whole." Military men would do well to ponder on such an opinion from the victor of Fontenoy.¹

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¹ *Réveries de Marshal Saxe*, 67.

Like Wellington after the battle of Waterloo, Marlborough was deeply affected by the carnage of this memorable battle, and the loss of long-trying and dear friends with which his triumph was accompanied. On the very night of the battle he was assailed by numerous appeals from the officers of different nations in his army, for the disposal of the numerous wounded who encumbered the plain. But on the ensuing morning, his sensitive mind was exposed to still more painful feelings on riding over the field of battle. He there surveyed, with a heavy heart, the numerous heaps of the dead and dying of all nations, which covered the field and the woods in every direction. The sight of the dead, the groans of the wounded, the frightful aspect of their mangled limbs, excited his warmest compassion. It exhibited war in its most woeful aspect, with all its horror and suffering, and none of its pomp and circumstance. He instantly gave orders that every possible relief should be extended to the wounded of every nation and country; and despatched a messenger to Marshal Villars, proposing a suspension of arms for two days, to provide for the relief of these wretched sufferers. This was at once and thankfully agreed to, and led to a meeting between Cadogan and the Chevalier Luxembourg, when the arrangement already mentioned was completed.

63.
Grief and
humanity of
Marlbo-
rough after
the battle.

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¹ Coxe, v.
71-73.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
139. Cape-
figue, Louis
XIV. iii.
124.

The number of wounded thus relieved amounted to three thousand ; but though Marlborough had thus done all in his power to relieve the general distress, the sight of it occasioned a serious illness in the British chief, from which he was long in recovering. All the ready money in his possession he divided among the wounded French officers.¹*

64.
Capture of
Mons, and
conclusion
of the cam-
paign, Oc-
tober 26.

No sooner were these pious cares concluded than the Allies resumed the investment of Mons—Marlborough, with the English and Dutch, having his headquarters at Belian, and Eugene, with the Germans, at Quaregnon. The Prince of Orange, with thirty battalions and as many squadrons, was intrusted with the blockade. Great efforts were immediately made to get the necessary stores and siege equipage up from Brussels ; but the heavy rains of autumn set in with such severity, that it was not till the 25th September that the trenches could be opened. Boufflers, though at no great distance, did not venture to disturb the operations : in addition to the strength of the Allied camp, want of provisions precluded the possibility of his moving.† On 9th October, a lodgment was effected in the covered-way ; on the 17th,

* “ In one of yours you lament the killed : in so great an action it is impossible to get the advantage but by exposing men's lives ; but the lamentable sight and thought of it has given me so much disquietude, that I believe it is the chief cause of my illness ; for it is melancholy to see so many brave men killed, with whom I have lived these eight years, when we thought ourselves sure of a peace.”—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, Oct. 3, 1709 ; COXE, v. 73.

† “ Nous avions,” dit Berwick, “ une autre difficulté insurmontable, celle de notre subsistance. De notre camp il y avoit sept lieues à celui des ennemis ; ainsi il nous fallait deux jours pour y aller : les directeurs des vivres bien-loin de pouvoir nous donner du pain d'avance, n'étoient pas même en état de faire le soir la distribution du pain qui étoit du le matin. Cela nous a déterminé à ne songer qu'à empêcher les ennemis de faire d'autres conquêtes.”—BERWICK'S *Memoirs*, 159—edit. Petitot.

the outworks were stormed ; and on the 26th the place surrendered with its garrison, fifteen hundred strong—all that remained out of three thousand five hundred at the commencement of the siege. By this important success, the conquest of Brabant was finished ; the burden and expense of the war removed from the Dutch provinces ; the barrier which they had so long sought after was rendered nearly complete ; and the defences of France were so far laid bare, that, by the reduction of Valenciennes and Quesnoy, in the next campaign, no fortified place would remain on this great road between the Allies and Paris. Having achieved this important success, the Allied generals put their army into winter-quarters at Ghent, Bruges, Brussels, and on the Meuse ; while fifty battalions of the French, with one hundred squadrons, were quartered, under the command of the Duke of Berwick, in the neighbourhood of Maubeuge, and the remainder of their great army in and around Valenciennes and Quesnoy.¹

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¹ Marlborough to Mr Sec. Boyle, October 21, 1709. Des. v. 617-621. Berwick's Mem. 154. Hist. de Marl. iii. 147-149.

During the progress of this short but brilliant campaign, Marlborough was more than ever annoyed and disheartened by the evident and increasing decline of his influence at home. The Whigs, elated by their late victory over the Queen, renewed their old system of bestowing every office on the strongest partisans of their own party. In pursuance of this design, they insisted on making Lord Orford First Lord of the Admiralty, in which, after a short but strenuous opposition on the part of the Queen, they succeeded, chiefly in consequence of Marlborough's powerful intercession. On the other hand, Harley and Mrs Masham continued to thwart him underhand in every way in their power, and scarcely disguised their desire to make the situation of the Duke

65.
Continued decline of Marlborough's influence at court.

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and Godolphin so uncomfortable that out of spleen they might resign—in which case the entire direction of affairs would have fallen into the hands of their party.* Influenced by these new favourites, the Queen became cold and resentful to the Duchess of Marlborough, to whom she had formerly been so much attached; and the Duke, perceiving this, strongly advised her to abstain from any correspondence with her Majesty, being convinced that to continue it would be more likely to increase than diminish the estrangement so rapidly growing between them. The Duchess, however, was herself of too irritable a temper to follow this wise advice: reproaches, explanations, and renewed complaints, ensued on both sides; and as usual in such cases, where excessive fondness has been succeeded by coldness, all attempts to repair the breach had only the effect of widening it. Numerous events at court, trifles in themselves, but to the jealous “confirmation strong,” served to show from what direction the wind was tending. The Duchess took the strong and injudicious step of intruding herself on the Queen, and asking what crime she had committed to produce so great an estrangement between them. This drew from her Majesty a letter, exculpating her from any fault, but ascribing their alienation to a discordance in political opinion, adding, “I do not think it a crime in any one not to be of my mind, or blameable, because you cannot see with my eyes, or hear with my ears.¹ It is impossible for you to recover my former kindness;

¹ Marlborough to the Duchess, August 22, 1709. Coxe, v. 105-109. Conduct, 267.

* “Be assured that Mrs Masham and Mr Harley will, underhand, do everything that can make the business uneasy, particularly to you the Lord-Treasurer, and me, for they know well that if we were removed everything would be in their power. This is what they labour for, believing it would make them both great and happy; but I am very well persuaded it would be their destruction.”—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, Nov. 1, 1709; COXE, v. 105.

but I shall behave myself to you as the Duke of Marlborough's wife and my groom of the stole." While this relieved Marlborough from the dread of a personal quarrel between the Duchess and her royal mistress, it only aggravated the precarious nature of his situation, by showing that the dissension was owing to a wider and more irremediable division on political subjects.*

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Encouraged by this powerful support at court, Harley now openly pursued his design of effecting the downfall of Marlborough, and his removal from office, and the command of the armies. The whole campaign, which had terminated so gloriously, was criticised in the most unjust and malignant spirit. The siege of Tournay was useless and expensive; the battle of Malplaquet an unnecessary carnage. It was even insinuated that the Duke had purposely exposed the officers to slaughter, that he might obtain a profit by the sale of their commissions. The preliminaries first agreed to at the Hague were too favourable to France; when Louis rejected them, the rupture of the negotiations rested with Marlborough. In a word, there was nothing done by the English general, successful or unsuccessful, pacific

66.
Unjust criticisms and censures on the campaign.

* "I see by your last the Queen continues her cold and unkind proceedings towards you. That must be so long as Mrs Masham has the opportunities of being daily with her. I agree with you that ill-nature and forgetfulness give just reason to those I am most concerned for not to trouble themselves any farther than what may concern the public good. It has always been my observation in disputes, especially in those of kindness and friendship, that *all reproaches, though ever so reasonable*, do serve no other end but to make the breach wider. I can't help being of opinion that there is a Power above which puts a period to our happiness or unhappiness; otherwise should anybody, eight years ago, have told me, after the success I have had, and the twenty-seven years' faithful service of yourself, that we should be obliged, even in the lifetime of the Queen, to seek happiness in a retired life, I should have thought it impossible."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, Aug. 22/26, 1709; COXE, v. 109.

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or warlike, which was not made the subject of strong condemnation and unmeasured invective. Harley even corresponded with the disaffected party in Holland, in order to induce them to cut short the Duke's career of victory by clamouring for a general peace. Louis was represented as invincible, and rising stronger from every defeat; and the prolongation of the war was alleged to be entirely owing to the selfish interests and ambition of the Allied chief. What was still more efficacious, and unhappily had some appearance of foundation in fact, they insinuated to the Queen that her great general had now become too powerful for a subject; that the whole direction of the Alliance had fallen into his hands; that he was the real sovereign; and that the Queen's sceptre had been broken by the field-marshal's baton. It may easily be conceived what an effect such considerations had on the mind of a weak and yet self-sufficient and obstinate woman. These and similar accusations, loudly re-echoed by all the Tories, and sedulously poured into the royal ear by Harley and Mrs Masham, made such an impression on the Queen that she did not offer the smallest congratulation to the Duchess on the victory of Malplaquet, nor express the least satisfaction at the Duke's escape from the innumerable dangers which he had incurred.¹

¹ Coxe, v.
115, 116.
Conduct,
270-274.

67.
Injudicious
request of
Marlbo-
rough to be
made cap-
tain-general
for life.

An ill-timed and injudicious step of Marlborough at this juncture, one of the few such which can be imputed to him in his whole public career, inflamed against him the jealousy of the Queen and the Tories. Perceiving the decline of his influence at court, and anticipating his dismissal from the command of the army at no distant period, which would have had the effect of immediately terminating the war, and depriving the nation of the

whole fruit of his victories, he solicited from the Queen a patent constituting him Captain-General for life. In vain he was assured by the Lord Chancellor that such an appointment was wholly unprecedented in English history; he persisted in laying the petition before her Majesty, by whom it was of course refused. Piqued at this disappointment, he wrote an acrimonious letter to the Queen, in which he reproached her with the neglect of his public services, and bitterly complained of the neglect of the Duchess, and the transfer of the royal favour to Mrs Masham. So deeply did Marlborough feel this disappointment, that, on leaving the Hague to return to England, he said publicly to the deputies of the States,—“I am grieved that I am obliged to return to England, where my services to your republic will be turned to my disgrace.”¹

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1709.

¹ Swift's Memorial on the Change of Ministry in 1710, p. 37. Coxe, v. 117.

Marlborough was received, however, in the most flattering manner by the people, when he landed on 15th November, and the thanks of both Houses of Parliament were tendered to him for his great and glorious services. The Queen declared, in her speech from the throne, that this campaign had been at least as glorious as any which had preceded it; and the Chancellor, in communicating the thanks of the House of Lords, added—“I am commanded by the Lords to give your Grace the thanks of this House for your continued and eminent services to Her Majesty and the public during the last campaign—of which nothing can be greater said than what Her Majesty, who always speaks with the utmost certainty and exactness, has declared from the throne—that it has been at least as glorious as any which had preceded it. But this repetition of the thanks of this august assembly has this advantage over the former, that it

68.
His flattering reception from the Houses of Parliament, Nov. 17, 1709.

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must be looked upon as added to, and standing upon, the foundation already laid in the records of this House, for preserving your memory fresh to all future times ; so that your Grace has also the satisfaction of seeing this everlasting monument of your glory rise every year much higher." Such was the effect produced on both Houses by the presence of the Duke, and the recollection of his glorious services, that liberal supplies for carrying on the war were granted by them. The Commons voted £6,000,000 for the service of the ensuing year, and, on the earnest representation of Marlborough, an addition was made to the military forces.¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
vi. 803.

69.
Increasing
jealousies
of him at
court.

But in the midst of all these flattering appearances, the hand of destruction was already impending over the British hero. It was mainly caused by the greatness and invaluable nature of his services. Envy, the invariable attendant on exalted merit, had already singled him out as her victim ; jealousy, the prevailing weakness of little minds, had prepared his ruin. The Queen had become uneasy at the greatness of her subject. There had even been a talk of the Duke of Argyll arresting him in her name, when in command of the army. Anne lent a ready ear to an insinuation of her flatterers, especially Mrs Masham, that she was enthralled by a single family ; that Marlborough was the real sovereign of England, and that the crown was overshadowed by the field-marshal's baton. The people had become envious of the greatness of the Duke : they were tired of hearing him called the Just. They lent a ready ear to the numerous party libels which represented him as entirely influenced by selfish ambition, and the whole patronage of the crown as engrossed by the Marlborough family. In the midst of this ferment, the public atten-

tion was violently arrested by a sermon preached by a Dr Sacheverell, at St Saviour's, Southwark—a handsome ecclesiastic, who united the confidence of an orator to the grace of an actor. In this declamation, the obsolete doctrine of passive obedience was revived; the principles of the Revolution stigmatised; the dangers of the Church exaggerated; the ministers loaded with reproaches; and Godolphin in particular pointed out to public reprobation under the name of Volpone.¹

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1709.

¹ Coxe, v.
122, 123.

The ministry was very much divided as to the course to be pursued with this libel. Somers and Marlborough strongly counselled a prosecution before the ordinary tribunals, to avoid making the culprit a martyr, and the case a "*cause célèbre*;" but, in the excited state of the public mind, a conviction before a jury was thought doubtful, and a prosecution before the House of Peers was resolved on. But after a long trial, the proceedings terminated in ridicule—Sacheverell being only found guilty of a minor charge by a majority of six, and ordered merely to abstain from preaching for three years. Instantly he became the idol of the populace. Numbers of them, including many of the nobility and gentry, attended him daily to Westminster Hall, striving to kiss his hand, and praying for his deliverance. Indescribable was the enthusiasm excited by the result of his trial, which was with reason regarded as equivalent to an acquittal. Riots took place in the capital; meetings were held in all the principal towns; addresses and petitions poured in from all quarters. The nation which seventy years before had run mad under the influence of the democratic passion, and twenty-two years before had risen up as one man to expel a tyrant, was now as violently convulsed in favour of the apostle of passive obedience and non-resistance.²

70.
His trial
before the
Peers.

² Cuning-
ham, ii.
257-264.
Parl. Hist.
vi. 807-824.

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1709.

71.
Marlbo-
rough
threatens
to resign.

Harley and Mrs Masham were not slow in taking advantage of this violent revulsion of public opinion in their favour. Encouraged by the open support of the populace, and the prospect of a Parliamentary majority on the next election, they now commenced the execution of the designs they had long meditated of gradually weeding the Whigs out of the Government, and supplying their places by determined partisans of their own. The government of the Tower, usually placed at the disposal of the commander-in-chief, was, to mortify Marlborough, bestowed without consulting him on Lord Rivers. At the same time he received the commands of the Queen to bestow the command of a vacant regiment on Colonel Hill, brother of Mrs Masham. Being resolved not to brook this second slight, he consulted the Whig leader, who warmly counselled him to resist. At length matters came to such a pass, and the ascendancy of Mrs Masham was so evident, while her influence was exercised in so undisguised a manner to humiliate him, that he prepared the draft of a letter of resignation of his commands to her Majesty, in which, after enumerating his services, and the abuse which Mrs Masham continued to heap on him and his relations, he concluded with saying—"I hope your Majesty will either dismiss her or myself."¹

¹ Coxe, v.
124-133.
Swift on
Change of
Ministry,
133-135.
Conduct,
227-231.

72.
His remon-
strances
with the
Queen.

Sunderland and several of the Whig leaders warmly approved of this vigorous step; but Godolphin, who foresaw the total ruin of the ministry and himself, in the resignation of the general, had influence enough to prevent its being sent. Instead of doing so, that nobleman had a long private audience with Her Majesty on the subject; in which, notwithstanding the warmest professions on her part, and the strong sense she enter-

tained of his great and lasting services, it was not difficult to perceive that a reserve as to future intentions was manifested, which indicated a loss of confidence. Marlborough declared he would be governed in the whole matter by the advice and opinion of his friends ; but strongly expressed his own opinion, "that all must be undone if this poison continues about the Queen." Such, however, was the agony of apprehension of Godolphin at the effects of the Duke's resignation that he persuaded him to adopt a middle course—the usual resource of second-rate men in critical circumstances, but generally the most hazardous that can be adopted. This plan was to write a warm remonstrance to the Queen, but without making Mrs Masham's removal a condition of his remaining in office. In this letter, after many invectives against Mrs Masham, and a full enumeration of his grievances, he concludes with these words :— "This is only one of many mortifications that I have met with ; and as I may not have many opportunities of writing to you, let me beg of your Majesty to reflect what your own people and the rest of the world must think, who have been witnesses of the love, zeal, and duty with which I have served you, when they shall see that, after all I have done, it has not been able to protect me against the malice of a bed-chamber woman. But your Majesty may be assured that my zeal for you and my country is so great, that in my retirement I shall daily pray for your prosperity, and that those who serve you as faithfully as I have done may never feel the hard return I have met with.¹

These expressions, how just soever in themselves, and natural in one whose great services had been requited as Marlborough's had been, were not likely to make a

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1709.

¹ Duchess of Marlborough to Maynwaring, Jan. 8, 1710. Coxe, v. 141-142. Marlborough to Queen Anne, Jan. 19, 1710.

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73.

He determines to resign if Mrs Masham is not removed.

favourable impression on the royal mind, and, accordingly, at a private audience which he had soon after of the Queen, he was received in the coldest manner.* He retired in consequence to Blenheim, determined to resign all his commands, unless Mrs Masham was removed from the royal presence. Matters seemed so near a rupture that the Queen personally applied to several of the Tories, and even Jacobites, who had long kept aloof from court, to support her in opposition to the address expected from both Houses of Parliament on the Duke's resignation. But Harley and Mrs Masham now saw that they were pushing things too far. In Napoleon's words, the pear was not yet ripe. Accordingly by their advice the Queen yielded on the point of Colonel Hill's regiment, and intimated to Godolphin that "she would not insist on his appointment." But though this concession removed the original cause of the disagreement, it did not heal the real sources of division; for Marlborough was still resolute to resign his command, unless Mrs Masham was removed from her situation about the Queen's person.¹

¹ Marlborough to Lord Somers, Jan. 21, 1710. Coxe, v. 140-149.

74.
But is persuaded to yield, and is seemingly reconciled to the Queen.

A meeting of the principal Whigs took place at the Duke of Devonshire's, where it was discussed whether they should rest satisfied with the concession which had been made, and allow the Queen's favourite to remain. The Duke gave his decided opinion in the negative, but the majority decided otherwise. Somers and Godolphin, in particular, did their utmost to bend the firm general; and they so far succeeded, in opposition to his better

* "On Wednesday se'nnight I waited upon the Queen, in order to represent the mischief of such recommendations in the army, and before I came away I expressed all the concern for her change to me that is natural to a man that has served her so faithfully for many years, which made no impression, nor was her Majesty pleased to take so much notice of me as to ask my

judgment, and the decided opinion of the Duchess, as to induce him to continue in office without requiring the removal of Mrs Masham from court. The Queen, delighted at this victory over so formidable an opponent, received him at his next audience in the most flattering manner, and with a degree of apparent regard which she had scarcely ever evinced to him in the days of his highest favour. But in the midst of these deceitful appearances his ruin was secretly resolved on; and in order to accelerate his departure from court, the Queen inserted in her reply to the address of the Commons, at the close of the session of Parliament, a statement of her resolution to send him immediately to Holland, as "I shall always esteem him the chief instrument of my glory, and of my people's happiness." He embarked accordingly, and landed at the Brill on March 18th, in appearance possessing the same credit and authority as before, but in reality thwarted and opposed by a jealous and ambitious faction at home, which restrained his most important measures, and prevented him from effecting anything in future on a level with his former glorious achievements.¹

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VII.
1709.

¹ Coxe, v.
143-148.
Conduct,
226-234.

At first sight it doubtless appears a very unaccountable circumstance that Marlborough should have attached so much importance to these appointments, and that the first general of the age, and the head of the coalition, should have seriously thought of resigning his command, because a first lord of the Admiralty was appointed without his being consulted, and a regiment disposed of

75.
Reflections
on these
steps of
Marlbo-
rough.

Lord-Treasurer where I was upon her missing me at Council. I have had several letters from him since I came here, and I cannot find that her Majesty has ever thought me worth naming: when my Lord-Treasurer once endeavoured to show her the mischief that would happen, she made him no answer but a bow."—*Marlborough to Lord Somers*, January 21, 1710.

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even by the sovereign against his recommendation. But those who make this observation, how natural soever it may be, have not duly considered either on what foundation power rests at all courts, but especially those presided over by a female sovereign, or what were the interests at stake in the great contest which prevailed between him and Harley for ascendancy over the mind of the Queen. Experience has abundantly proved that the continual and daily insinuation of adverse sentiments and opinions, by those who have constant access to the person, is an influence which even the strongest mind can rarely withstand ; with a weak sovereign, prone to inconsistency, the great defect of the female character, and warped by favouritism, it becomes omnipotent. Hence it is that in all ages, and at all courts, bed-chamber appointments have been regarded by the first statesmen as matters of paramount importance, and that many of the greatest changes recorded in history have depended on the issue of a struggle between two parties for a few apparently trivial household appointments. Beyond all doubt, it was the splitting of the Whigs on the choice of the persons to hold three white sticks, in May 1812, which was the main cause of Napoleon's final overthrow, for it was the means of retaining England in the Alliance ; and it was the yielding of Marlborough in 1710, as to Mrs Masham's retaining her appointment about Queen Anne's person, which saved Louis XIV., by throwing England out of it.¹

¹ Alison's
Europe, c.
64, § 45.

76.
Great inter-
ests at
stake in the
bedcham-
ber appoint-
ments.

In addition to this, it must be recollected what and how great were the public interests which were at stake in the promotion or checking of this bed-chamber intrigue against Godolphin and Marlborough's administration. They were both aware that Harley and Bolingbroke,

who were ready to come in the moment they went out, and who were strongly supported alike by the secret inclinations of the Queen and the wishes of those immediately about her person, would, to please the populace and gratify the public cry for a reduction of taxation, lose no time in withdrawing from the Alliance and concluding a separate treaty with France. The event has proved that these apprehensions were too well founded ; that, in doing so, they would consent to the crown of Spain remaining on the head of a Bourbon prince, and, for the sake of present popularity, abandon the whole objects of the war, and seriously endanger the independence of Great Britain in future times. There appeared no way of avoiding so dangerous and disheartening a result but by insisting upon the removal from the palace of the secret counsellors, to whose influence the danger was mainly owing. Great public interests were then indissolubly wound up with this contest for household appointments. Not less than at Blenheim or Malplaquet the fate of Europe was involved in the issue of the strife ; and if Marlborough had yielded the contest without a struggle, he would have deserted his duty, and endangered the civil and religious liberties of his country and of Europe, not less than if he had abandoned his post on any of these momentous fields.

It appears still more surprising how a party could be found in Great Britain, especially at that period, so soon after the Revolution, which should found their principles on such a basis, and rest their claim to the favour of the nation on the entire abandonment of all the objects for which it had so long and strenuously contended. For eighty years the desire of civil and religious freedom had been the prevailing national passion, and had more than once led

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1709.

77.
Extraordi-
nary change
in the pub-
lic mind re-
garding the
war and its
hero.

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them into the most dreadful excesses ; but now the apostle of passive obedience and non-resistance had become the idol of popular adoration. For the preservation of the balance of power, they had contended for a quarter of a century with the most heroic perseverance, and, in the pursuit of that object, consented to the greatest sacrifices ; but now they gave their support to a party which was prepared to abandon all these objects, leave the ancient enemy of England in possession of all but universal power, and conclude a glorious and triumphant war by a perilous and disgraceful peace. The general who led their armies had been beyond all precedent successful : his career had been one continued triumph ; he had never yet suffered a reverse ; and not only were they prepared to forego the whole fruit of his victories, but he himself had become, without reason, the object of unmeasured obloquy and vituperation.

78.
Cause of
this remark-
able change.

But the marvel ceases when the ruling selfishness of the vast majority of men is taken into consideration, and the unvarying effect of transcendent greatness to produce envy—of magnitude of obligations to breed ingratitude. The deeds of the great seldom awaken in little minds any other feeling but that of jealousy ; gratitude for favours is felt as a pleasurable sensation only by the generous, and to them it is perhaps the highest. It was the very greatness of Marlborough, the magnitude and inappreciable nature of his services, which proved his ruin, for they at once roused the envy of the malignant, and oppressed the selfish with the painful feeling of irre-quitable obligation. More particularly, it was the combination of military greatness with civil power and influence which proved fatal to him, as it has done to almost every illustrious man in ancient or modern times in

whose hands it has even for a brief period been invested. To see one who was once their equal at the same time triumphing over their enemies and ruling themselves, is in general felt as insupportable by mankind. It is in a sovereign only, to whom it descends by birthright, that it can be tolerated. In any other, it produces such a mortification of self-love to others as ere long ends in a storm, by which the obnoxious benefactor of his country is overthrown.

Miltiades and Themistocles in Greece, Scipio and Cæsar in Rome, fell successive sacrifices to this feeling : Cromwell escaped the ruin with which it is fraught only by a fortunate death ; Napoleon, by turning the selfish passions of the people loose upon foreign countries. The moment he ceased to feed the public desires by continued triumphs was the commencement of his fall ; he has told us so himself a hundred times. Wellington escaped it only by being clear of political power when he had the command of the army : his unpopularity in 1831, and narrow escape from death in the streets of London on June 18, 1832, may show us how speedily his power would have been shattered, if, like Marlborough, he had attempted to combine the functions of prime-minister and commander-in-chief ; if he had united the influence of Mr Pitt to the glory of the Peninsular triumphs. Men can bear, though generally with some degree of impatience, a long career of military greatness in their generals, for it is gained over their enemies ; but they never can tolerate for any length of time, in any but a crowned head, civil power in their rulers, for it is exercised over themselves. A combination of the two is speedily felt as insupportable.

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1709.

79.
Parallel ex-
amples in
former
times.

CHAPTER VIII.

INVASION OF RUSSIA BY CHARLES XII.—HIS DEFEAT AT PULTOWA BY THE CZAR PETER.—HIS CHARACTER.—CAMPAIGN OF 1709 IN SAVOY AND SPAIN.—CONFERENCE OF GERTRUYDENBERG.—CAMPAIGN OF 1710 IN FLANDERS.—MARLBOROUGH PASSES VILLARS' LINES.—SIEGES OF DOUAI, BETHUNE, ST VENANT AND AIRE.—INCREASING INFLUENCE OF HARLEY AND THE TORIES.—DISMISSAL OF GODOLPHIN AND CHANGE OF THE MINISTRY IN ENGLAND.—INCREASING DIFFICULTIES OF MARLBOROUGH'S SITUATION.

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1.
Striking
analogy be-
tween the
War of the
Succession
and that of
the Revo-
lution.

As the War of the Succession, and that which a century after desolated Europe in consequence of the French Revolution, were substantially waged for the same object, and divided the powers of Northern and Southern Europe much in the same manner, so there was a most extraordinary coincidence in the chief seats of war, and even in the principal battles, on the two occasions. The real object in both was to rescue Europe from the thralldom of French domination : the ambition of Napoleon only came in place of that of Louis XIV. Germany and the Peninsula in both were long the seat of war. The Bourbon succession in Spain was as much the object of dread in the beginning of the eighteenth century, as that of Napoleon was in the opening of the nineteenth. But in both, the decisive blows were struck in Flanders ; and the victorious march of Blucher and Wellington from Brussels to Paris in 1815, not less than the narrow escape which Louis XIV. made from a similar invasion

in 1711, proves the wisdom with which Marlborough and Eugene acted in assailing France in that quarter, and fixing the principal seat of war in the Flemish plains.

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As these two great wars were thus identical in their objects, and the theatres where their principal operations were carried on, so there was a most extraordinary coincidence in many of the principal battles by which they were both illustrated. The battle of Marengo, which in 1800 conquered Italy for France, and placed Napoleon on the consular throne, had its exact counterpart in that of Turin, which a century before had consigned it to the Austrian rule. The battle of Salamanca, which in 1812 rescued three-fourths of Spain from French oppression, was but a repetition of that of Almanza, in which the genius of Berwick, a hundred years before, had secured it for the house of Bourbon. The battle of Jena, which in 1806 at once crushed the Prussian monarchy, and surrendered the whole of the north of Germany to Napoleon, was not more decisive than that of Blenheim, which in 1704 at one blow prostrated Bavaria, delivered all southern Germany, and hurled the French forces with disgrace behind the Rhine. The victory of Ramilies has its counterpart in that of Austerlitz; that of Oudenarde in Waterloo. Scarce a parallel to the terrible struggle of Malplaquet, followed by the fall of Mons, is to be found in European history, till we come down to the carnage of Borodino, followed by the abandonment of Moscow. The siege of Lille alone stands forth in solitary and unapproachable grandeur in European warfare. No similar achievement was effected either by the energy of Frederick or the genius of Napoleon.

2.
Remarkable
coincidence
of particular
battles in
both
periods.

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3.
Remarkable
parallel of
the inva-
sions of
Russia by
Charles
XII. and
Napoleon.

The expedition to Russia, which forms so prominent and sublime a part of the wars of the Revolution, was not without its counterpart in that of the Succession. Charles XII. was the predecessor of Napoleon in the great assault on the Muscovite power. The identity between these two memorable expeditions, with just a century between them, was such that it almost seems miraculous. Both paved the way for the attack on the great northern power, by the conquest of all the lesser states in their vicinity ; both prepared long, and accumulated all their forces for the decisive struggle. The world anticipated for both triumphant success in its issue. Both brought to the attempt military talents of the highest, military glory of the most commanding kind. Both were surrounded before they set out by the princes and diplomatists of Europe, anxious to secure their favour or deprecate their wrath ; *both set out from Dresden*. The world in anxious suspense, but confident expectation, gazed on the steps of both in the progress towards what seemed the entire dominion of Eastern Europe. Both met with destruction in the ultimate fate of the attempt ; and it is hard to say to which the lines of the poet are most applicable :—

“ No joys to him pacific sceptres yield ;
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field.
Behold surrounding kings their powers combine,
And some capitulate and some resign.
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain ;
‘ Think nothing gained,’ he cries, ‘ till nought remain,
On Moscow’s walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the Polar sky !’
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait ;
Stern famine guards the solitary coast,
And winter barricades the realms of frost.
He comes—not want and cold his course delay ;
Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa’s day !

The vanquished hero leaves his broken bands,
 And shows his miseries in distant lands ;
 Condemned a needy suppliant to wait,
 While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
 But did not chance at length her error mend ?
 Did no subverted empire mark his end ?
 Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound ?
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground ?
 His fall was destined to a barren strand,
 A petty fortress and a dubious hand :
 He left a name at which the world grew pale,
 To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”*

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No sooner had Charles XII., by the indefatigable exertions and diplomatic address of Marlborough, effected a pacification with the Emperor and the German powers, than he turned his attention to the East, and made serious preparations for his long-meditated expedition against Russia. Not a doubt crossed his mind as to its ultimate success ; and his confidence was generally shared by all the statesmen of Europe. He had so long and uniformly been victorious that he was thought to be invincible. He had defeated at Narva sixty thousand Russians with nine thousand Swedes. He had recently dictated, as a conqueror, from his camp at Alt-Ranstadt, near Leipsic, a glorious peace to his rival, Augustus, king of Poland, by which the latter renounced all his rights to that throne, and even consented to deliver up Count Patkul, the ambassador of the Czar Peter at his court, to his vengeance, whom, with frightful barbarity, at which all Europe shuddered, Charles had put to death like a common murderer on the wheel. He had recently visited the plain of Lutzen, and the tomb of Gustavus Adolphus, and said, on leaving it, “ I have endeavoured to live like him : perhaps God will accord to me a death like his.” His court at Dresden had resembled rather

^{4.} Proud position of Charles XII. at Dresden, before he began his march to Poland.

* JOHNSON'S *Vanity of Human Wishes*.

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¹ Biograph.
Universel.
viii. 193,
(Charles
XII.) Vol-
taire—
Pierre le
Grand.

that of Timour the Tartar and Attila, than anything previously witnessed in European history.* Nothing was seen like it till Napoleon, a century after, set out from the same capital on a similar expedition. No one could entertain a doubt of the success of an enterprise undertaken by a monarch possessed of such resources, at the head of an army which had never sustained a reverse, and actuated by such ambitious and heroic sentiments.¹

5.
His march
from Dres-
den to Pol-
and, Sept.
1707.

Charles commenced his march from Dresden on the 7th September 1707, directing his steps towards Poland. He was at the head of forty-three thousand veteran troops, admirably disciplined and equipped, and provided with every necessary for the most protracted campaign, from the heavy contributions they had so long levied on the opulent provinces of Saxony. Six thousand men were left by the Swedish monarch at Warsaw to defend the crown of Stanislaus, whom, in lieu of Augustus, he had placed on the throne of Poland. With the remainder of his forces Charles directed his march, with fearless intrepidity, into the interior of Russia. He never thought of his adversary's forces: Alexander the Great, with thirty-five thousand men, had attempted and effected the conquest of Asia. He directed his steps across Lithuania, crossed the Borysthenes at *Mohilow*, the scene of one of the first actions between Napoleon and the Russians in the campaign of 1812, and arrived, without any serious opposition, on the Dnieper, in the neighbourhood of Smolensko,² the theatre of the first desperate

² Biograph.
Univ. viii.
193. Vol-
taire—
Pierre le
Grand.

* "Charles XII. jouissait de son succès dans Alt-Ranstadt, près de Leipsic. Les princes Protestans de l'Empire d'Allemagne venaient en foule, lui rendre leurs hommages et lui demander sa protection. Presque toutes les puissances lui envoyaient des ambassadeurs. L'Empereur Joseph I. déferait à ses vœux. Pierre succombait à ses vœux à l'égard de Pologne."—VOLTAIRE, *Vie de Pierre le Grand*, chap. 16.

battle between those redoubtable opponents in that dreadful contest.

Hitherto the Swedes had experienced no serious opposition in their march; but from the time that, in the neighbourhood of Smolensko, they entered the old territories of Red Russia, the case was very different. The terrible features of a national war immediately manifested themselves. The Russians pursued the system by which, a century after, on the advice of Wellington, they defeated the invasion of Napoleon. They made no attempt to resist the Swedes in pitched battles, for which they were conscious they were unequal, but withdrew from the villages as they approached; fired the houses, which, being all built of wood, were speedily reduced to ashes; destroyed the mills, burnt or carried away the grain, drove off the cattle, defaced the roads, and broke down the bridges. The main body of the Swedish army advanced without opposition, though very slowly, from these obstacles; but an active enemy, mounted on indefatigable steeds, hovered on its flanks, and the foraging parties and detachments which they sent out to obtain provisions were speedily assailed by an enemy previously invisible, but who never failed to make his presence felt when an insulated party presented an opportunity for attack. The old tactics of the East against the West were again repeated for the twentieth time; and the march of Charles XII. recalled the sufferings of Darius in Scythia, of Crassus in Mesopotamia, or of Richard Cœur-de-Lion in Palestine, of which ancient story and modern romance have left such graphic pictures.^{1*}

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6.

Increasing
difficulties
of Charles
in his march.

¹ Biograph.
Univ. viii.
193. Coxe's
Marlb. v.
96.

* The *Marlborough Papers* contain several very interesting letters to the Duke of Marlborough from Count Piper, in which he details the rapid pro-

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7.

Charles di-
rects his
march to
the Ukraine
to join
Mazeppa.

Meanwhile the Czar, while he avoided any serious action, followed the footsteps of the invader at a little distance with a large army; and this circumstance, joined to the difficulties experienced in his march from the devastation of the country and flight of the inhabitants, induced Charles to lend a willing ear to the propositions of Mazeppa, Hetman of the Cossacks, who offered him his alliance and the support of his people. He never doubted of success when his veteran Swedes were supported by twenty thousand light horse, whom the Cossack chief could bring into the field. Thither, accordingly, Charles directed his steps, and, crossing the Dnieper, he plunged into the boundless and desolate plains of the Ukraine. Infinite difficulties were experienced in the course of the march, which took up a very long time; and when at length Mazeppa did make his appearance, in September 1708, it was with two regiments instead of twenty thousand men. In effect, he had raised eighteen thousand, who joined his standard, thinking they were to combat for the Czar; but no sooner did they learn that they were to join the King of Sweden than all the rest abandoned their colours, and returned home, resolved not to be treacherous to a sovereign who had given them no cause of offence.¹

Meanwhile a still more serious disaster befel the Swedish monarch. His ammunition and stores of every kind having been exhausted by his long marches and

¹ Voltaire's
Vie de
Pierre, c.
17. Biog.
Univ. vi.
193.

gress of Charles XII. through the western provinces of Muscovy, in his march towards the Ukraine. He describes the general consternation of the Russians, their abandonment of their homes, the voluntary conflagration of their towns and villages, and considers the conquest of the country and dethronement of the Czar as inevitable. These accounts resemble those given in the bulletins of Napoleon of the self-sacrifices of the Russians in 1812.—See COXE, v. 96, note.

protracted residence, now extending to above a year in Poland and the Ukraine, a great convoy was with infinite pains collected in Lithuania, and intrusted to the Swedish general, Levenhaupt, who was at the head of 24,000 men, of whom not a half were Swedish troops. Charles, disappointed in the supplies he expected from Mazeppa, and reduced to the greatest straits from want of ammunition and provisions, sent the most urgent orders to his lieutenant to hasten his march. But these orders arrived too late to avert the disaster which ensued. The Czar, intent on intercepting this important convoy, upon the safe arrival of which the issue of the campaign and the fate of his crown depended, collected a powerful army of thirty thousand combatants, with which he watched the movements of the Swedish general. He permitted him, with the huge convoy which he conducted, to pass the Borysthenes without molestation, but fell upon him when his unwieldy column was involved in the extensive marshes which adjoin the tributary streams that, from the eastward, flow into that noble river. The Swedes fought with their usual gallantry, and, during four days that the conflict lasted, were never entirely broken. But the perseverance of the Russians, and the skill of the Czar, at length triumphed, and inflicted on their opponents the most dreadful disaster. By almost incredible exertions of valour, Levenhaupt, with a part of his force, succeeded in making his way through, and joined Charles ; but he lost 8000 men killed and wounded, 950 prisoners, 17 guns, and 45 standards ; and, what was a still greater disaster, the whole precious convoy fell into the hands of the Russians.¹

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8.
Defeat of
Levenhaupt
and capture
of his con-
voy, Sept.
11, 1708.

¹ Voltaire's
Vie de
Pierre, c.
17. Biog.
Univ. vi.
193.

Charles, though grievously affected by this disaster,

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9.
March of
Charles
towards
Moscow,
Nov. 1708.

was not dismayed. Having collected 25,000 men from the remains of his own army, the wreck of Levenhaupt's force, and the trifling reinforcements brought up by Mazeppa, he passed the Desna, and in the commencement of winter began his march towards Moscow. No words can convey an idea of the horrors of the march, or the sufferings which the soldiers underwent in the course of it. Charles, however, still persevered, and stifled every complaint by sharing the fare, enduring the hardships, and facing the dangers of the meanest soldier in his army. Animated by this example, the troops struggled on with heroic resolution ; but the rigour of the climate was not the less severely felt by their exhausted frames. In the month of December the thermometer fell to 20° below zero of Fahrenheit ; and under this terrible cold above two thousand of his men, almost all destitute of any adequate clothing, perished in a few days. In vain the Chancellor Piper conjured him to halt, to fortify himself in some town of the Ukraine, or to recross the Desna, and seek refuge in Poland. Charles replied, that to do so would be to fly before the Czar ; that he was not the man to do so ; that the weather would soon become milder ; and that they must continue their march to Moscow.¹

¹ Chapilain
Norberg, ii.
263. Vol-
taire's Vie
de Pierre,
c. 17.

10.
After a
thousand
hardships,
they arrive
at Pultowa,
June 1709.

Animated by the heroic spirit of their chief, the Swedes, like the Macedonians of old, followed their beloved king through difficulties which, to any other troops, would have been deemed insurmountable. Driven in different, and often opposite directions, by the necessity of finding subsistence, they advanced at one period towards the south-east, as far as the western end of the great central ridge which separates the Nogois Tartars from the Cossacks of Tanais. It is on the east of those

mountains that the altars which mark the extreme limits of Alexander the Great's conquests in Asia still remain. He was there joined by some thousand Zaporavians, whom he embodied into two regiments. Aided by this reinforcement, he laid siege to PULTOWA, a small town, situated on the river Vorskla, in which there were considerable supplies of provisions, and which might serve as a base for operations in the direction of Moscow. No sooner did Peter hear that this town was besieged than he collected all his forces, and advanced at the head of sixty thousand men, for the most part well-disciplined veterans, accompanied by a plentiful train of artillery, to attack the Swedish king, whose troops were now reduced by the rigour of the climate, sickness, and the sword, to twenty-four thousand men.¹

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¹ Voltaire's
Vie de
Pierre, c.
17. Biog.
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The Czar arrived in the neighbourhood of Pultowa on the 15th June, and took post at a little distance from Charles. His first care was to place his cavalry in a position between two woods, where it could not be outflanked. His next, to cover his infantry with redoubts, which might enable them to withstand the dreaded assault of the Swedish soldiers. For the next fortnight nothing material occurred except some skirmishes between the light troops on either side, in one of which Charles was severely wounded by a musket-ball in the foot, which confined him for several days to bed, and obliged him to submit to a painful operation, which he bore with his wonted stoicism. Before he was recovered, or able to sit on horseback, he learned that the Czar was making preparations to attack him in his intrenchments. No sooner did he obtain this intelligence than the spirit of the hero revived.² He immediately ordered the troops to issue from their camp, and,

11.
Prepara-
tions for the
battle of
Pultowa,
June 15,
1709.

² Voltaire's
Vie de
Pierre, c.
17. Biog.
Univ. vi.
193.

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instead of awaiting the attack, made dispositions for himself assaulting the Russian intrenchments. Being still unable to sit on horseback, he was carried in a litter to share in the dangers and glories of a day which could not fail to be decisive of the fate of the Russian and Swedish monarchies.

12.
Battle of
Pultowa,
and total
defeat of
Charles,
July 6,
1709.

Such was the valour of the Swedish infantry that on the first onset they carried two redoubts; and in the first tumult of success they shouted "Victory." But their triumph was of short duration. The other redoubts were bravely defended; and the Czar, confident in his numbers and the discipline of his troops, led them out of their intrenchments, and the battle became general in the open plain. The leaders on each side shared in the dangers of the meanest soldier, and displayed a valour worthy of the most exalted rank. No great manœuvring took place; hand to hand, breast to breast, bayonet to bayonet, they contended for two hours with the most determined resolution. The litter of Charles was broken in pieces by a cannon-shot, and one of the men who carried it killed by his side. He calmly ordered himself to be put down, and sat till a new one was formed of the pikes of the soldiers. The Czar had his clothes perforated in several places with musket-balls, but, almost by a miracle, himself escaped unhurt. At length, after a desperate conflict, the Swedes, overwhelmed by numbers three times their own, were broken on all sides. A desperate carnage took place, for scarce any quarter was given. Nine thousand were killed on the field of battle, three thousand prisoners, chiefly cavalry, were made in the pursuit: the Russians only lost twelve hundred men. Of necessity Charles was mounted on horseback in the general flight from the field.¹ He bore the excru-

¹ Voltaire's
Vie de
Pierre, c.
17. Biog.
Univ. vi.
194.

ciating torture of his wound, and the anguish of a defeat irreparable beyond example, with equal resolution.

Great as was this disaster, it was shortly after followed by another still more overwhelming. Charles retreated towards the south with fourteen thousand men, the remains of all that had escaped from that fatal field.

But he was pursued by Prince Menzikoff, at the head of ten thousand of that light horse which, in every age, have proved so formidable to the invaders of the nomad plains. The Swedes, keeping close together, contrived to retire for some days without experiencing any considerable disaster ; but at length they were entirely enveloped by their indefatigable pursuers. Surrounded on all sides, encumbered with wounded, without either provisions or ammunition, that proud infantry, which had achieved so many victories, and universally passed for invincible, was reduced to despair, and obliged to capitulate. Fourteen thousand men laid down their arms, including the whole Zaporavians, the last allies of the unhappy monarch, and who had suffered least in the battle. Count Piper, the king's prime-minister, Field-Marshal Renschild, General Levenhaupt, and all the other general officers of the army, were included in that disastrous capitulation. Charles, however, whom nothing could subdue, refused to be included in it, and made his way across the Borysthenes at the head of two thousand horse—the poor remains of forty-three thousand whom he had led in person from Saxony, and eighteen thousand who had subsequently set out to join him under General Levenhaupt.¹

This decisive victory at once doubled the strength of Russia, and reduced Sweden again to its original rank of a fourth-rate power, from which it had been only

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13.

Surrender
of fourteen
thousand
Swedes un-
der Count
Piper, July
12.

¹ Voltaire's
Vie de
Pierre, c.
17. Biog.
Univ. vi.
194.

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14.
Reflections
on this
event, and
grief it oc-
casioned to
Marlboro-
ugh.

raised by the transcendent military abilities of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. Yet is it evident that this terrible catastrophe, which closed the military career of the latter conqueror, and first established Russia in the proud pre-eminence which she has ever since maintained, was chiefly, if not entirely, owing to his own imprudence, and his unfounded contempt of the enemy whom he had to combat. The opinion of Napoleon seems unquestionably well founded, that his disasters were entirely owing to his forgetting the first principle of military science—that of maintaining a connection with the base of operations; and that if he had proceeded more methodically, and secured himself in Poland before he advanced to Moscow, he would have proved successful. It is remarkable that the very fault which that great man has so clearly pointed out in the campaign of Charles, is precisely the one into which he himself fell in his invasion of the same country. Marlborough was much affected with this total ruin of a monarch who had lately had such brilliant prospects, and a warrior whom he knew personally, and highly esteemed. But he was too sagacious not to see that his undue contempt of his enemies had been the cause of all his misfortunes, and that his imprudence had been his ruin.^{1*}

¹ Napoleon in Month.
iii. 172-174.
Coxe, v.
97, 98.

Peter the Great, who gained this astonishing and decisive success, was one of the most remarkable men

* "If this unfortunate king had been so well advised as to have made peace the beginning of this summer, he might in a great measure have influenced the peace between France and the Allies, and made other kingdoms happy. I am extremely touched with the misfortunes of this young king. His continued successes, and the contempt he had of his enemies, have been his ruin."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, August 26, 1709; *Desp.* v. 510.

who ever appeared on the theatre of public affairs. He was nothing by halves. For good or for evil he was gigantic. Vigour seems to have been the great characteristic of his mind ; but it was often fearfully disfigured by passion, and he was not unfrequently misled by the example of more advanced states. To elevate Russia to an exalted place among nations, and give her the influence which her vast extent and physical resources seemed to put within her reach, was throughout life the great object of his ambition ; and he succeeded in it to an extent which naturally acquired for him the unbounded admiration of mankind. His overthrow of the Strelitzes, long the Prætorian Guards and terror of the Czars of Muscovy, was effected with a vigour and stained by a cruelty similar to that with which Sultan Mahmoud, a century after, destroyed the Janissaries at Constantinople. The sight of a young and despotic sovereign leaving the glittering toys and real enjoyments of royalty, to labour in the dockyards of Saardem with his own hands, and instruct his subjects in ship-building by first teaching himself, was too striking and remarkable not to excite universal attention. And when the result of this was seen,—when the Czar was found introducing among his subjects the military discipline, naval architecture, nautical skill, as well as other arts and warlike institutions of Europe, and in consequence long resisting and at length destroying the mighty conqueror who had so long been the terror of northern Europe, the astonishment of men knew no bounds. He was celebrated as at once the Solon and Scipio of modern times ; and literary servility, vying with disinterested admiration, extolled him as one of the greatest heroes and benefactors of his species who had ever appeared among men.

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15.

Character of
Peter the
Great of
Russia.

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16.
His errors,
and delu-
sion regard-
ing him.

But time, the great dispeller of illusions, whose mighty arm no individual greatness, how great soever, can long withstand, has begun to abate much of this colossal reputation. His temper was violent in the extreme; frequent acts of hideous cruelty, and occasional oppression, signalised his reign: he was often impelled, by ill-directed zeal for the advancement of his people, into measures which in reality and in the end retarded their improvement. At one time he could subject, on mere suspicion, his most faithful servants to the most cruel tortures; at another, destroy a splendid mirror in an ungovernable fit of passion. He was thoroughly despotic, and could tolerate no opposition, on any grounds, to his will. The destruction of the Strelitzes, or Prætorian Guards of the capital, was a frightful act of severity; but it was unavoidable, and was attended with as much good in the end as it was executed with courage in the beginning. But many of his other acts of gigantic despotism had not a similar excuse. More than any other man, he did evil that good might come of it. He impelled his people, as he thought, to civilisation, though, while launching into the stream, hundreds of thousands perished in the waves. "Peter the Great," says Mackintosh, "did not civilise Russia: that undertaking was beyond his genius, great as it was; he only gave the Russians the art of civilised war." The truth was, he attempted what was altogether impracticable. No one man can at once civilise a nation: he can only put it in the way of civilisation. To complete the fabric must be the work of continued effort and sustained industry during many successive generations. That Peter failed in raising his people to a level with the other nations of

Europe, in refinement and industry, is no reproach to him. It was impossible to do so in less than several centuries. The real particular in which he erred was, that he departed from the national spirit, that he tore up the national institutions, and violated in numerous instances the strongest national feelings. He clothed his court and capital in European dresses ; but men do not put off old feelings with the costume of their fathers.

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Peter's civilisation extended no further than the surface. He succeeded in inducing an extraordinary degree of discipline in his army, and the appearance of considerable refinement among his courtiers. He effected no material ameliorations in the condition of his subjects ; and by endeavouring to force them at once up to a level with the states of Western Europe, he not only rendered his government unpopular with the rural population, but also prevented his improvements from penetrating the great body of the people. In his efforts to construct a European capital in the marshes of Livonia, he was in the end successful ; but it was at the expense of the lives of a hundred thousand of his subjects, who perished in the attempt. His genius was vast, but it was after the manner of the Orientals rather than the Europeans. Cheops raising the pyramids from the toil and sweat of generations of captives was the emblem and prototype of his government. It could not be otherwise. It is easier to remodel an army than change a nation ; and the celebrated *bon-mot* of Diderot, that the Russians were "rotten before they were ripe," is too happy an expression, indicating how much easier it is to introduce the vices than the virtues of civilisation among an unlettered people. To this day the civilisation of Russia has never descended below the higher ranks ;

17.
Real character of his changes.

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and the efforts of the really patriotic Czars who have since wielded the Muscovite sceptre—Alexander and Nicholas—have been mainly in abandoning the fictitious career into which Peter turned the people, and the reviving with the old institutions the true spirit and inherent aspirations of the nation. The immense though less obtrusive success with which their efforts have been attended, and the gradual though still slow descent of civilisation and improvement through the great body of the people, prove the wisdom of the principles on which they have proceeded. Possibly Russia is yet destined to afford another illustration of the truth of Montesquieu's maxim, that no nation ever yet rose to durable greatness but through institutions in harmony with its spirit. Yet was Peter's attempt, though in many respects a mistaken, a great and glorious one: it was the effort of a rude but lofty and magnanimous mind, which attributes to mankind in general that vigour and ambition of which it is itself conscious. And without shutting our eyes to his many and serious errors, in charity let us hope that the words of Peter on his deathbed have been realised: "I trust that, in respect of the good I have striven to do my people, God will pardon my sins."

18.
Campaign
on the
Rhine, and
its disasters,
July 29.

The great concentration of the forces on both sides in Flanders, during the campaign of 1709, rendered the operations on both sides feeble in other quarters. Great plans had been formed by Marlborough and Eugene for a simultaneous irruption into France from the side of Alsace and Piedmont, with the view of the two invading armies uniting at Lyons at the same time that the grand army moved direct from Flanders on Paris; but the vigorous efforts of the French king, and still more the jealousies and tardiness of the Allies, wherever Marlbo-

rough was not in person to allay them, rendered them abortive. So slow were the movements of the German princes on the Upper Rhine, that, before any considerable force could be collected to threaten Alsace, a strong body of men had been assembled under Marshal d'Harcourt to defend the lines of Lauterburg, and cover that province. Want of money, and the usual jealousies of the northern states of Germany, long delayed the march of the contingents of Hanover and other powers. But at length they arrived in the end of July, and sanguine hopes were entertained of success; for while the Elector of Hanover occupied the attention of Marshal d'Harcourt by a feigned attack on his lines of Lauterburg, Count Merci led a chosen body of six thousand men, by forced and secret marches, by Basle into Alsace, where he intrenched himself near Neuburg, on the Rhine, directly in their rear. But, the latter officer having detached seven thousand to watch them, Count Merci imprudently left his intrenchments, and met his antagonist in the open plain. The result was, that, after a sharp action, he was totally defeated, and driven across the Rhine with the loss of half his army. This disaster put an end to all thoughts of the invasion of Franche-Comté, and rendered abortive the operations in Piedmont by the discord it produced between the cabinet of Vienna and that of Turin.¹

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¹ Hist. Mil.
ix. 227-235.
Coxe, v.
83, 84.

In conformity with the concerted plan of operations, Victor Amadeus made active preparations for commencing hostilities on the side of the Maritime Alps, and a considerable Austrian force, under Marshal Daun, was assembled to co-operate with it. But here again the discord between the two courts intervened with fatal effect to mar the operations of the armies. The Duke

19.
Operations
in Pied-
mont, and
their abor-
tive result.

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of Savoy refused to move his troops till he had received the investiture of the Vigenavaisin, stipulated for him by the treaty of 1703 ; which the Emperor declined granting, on the plea that he included in it *nine villages* which did not belong to it, but were fiefs of the Empire ! On such miserable disputes did events hinge in the south of Europe, on which the issue of the war was in a great degree dependent. Louis XIV. took advantage of this schism to make overtures to the Duke of Savoy through his daughter, the Queen of Spain, offering him the most advantageous terms if he would consent to a separate accommodation, and representing the impolicy of his continuing in an alliance the object of which was to expel his own daughter from her throne. These representations produced a considerable effect : the Duke of Savoy remained at Turin in a state of such anxiety and discontent that it preyed upon his health, and brought on an alarming fever. In consequence of these causes the campaign was not opened till the middle of August ; and Marshal Daun, who commanded the invaders, then found the Duke of Berwick so strongly posted, in a position covering Briançon, that he could not force the passage into Dauphiné ; and soon after, having heard of the defeat of Count Merci, he retired into Piedmont, having obtained no other advantage, in a campaign from which such mighty results were expected, but the capture of the trifling post of Anneci, garrisoned by sixty men, in the entrance of the Alps !¹

¹ Coxe, v.
86, 87.
Berwick's
Mem. 156-
159—edit.
Petitot.

The war in Spain assumed a new and much more alarming aspect this year, in consequence of the contest having become a national one, and of the ardour displayed by the Castilians in behalf of the Bourbon dynasty. A great change had occurred in the feelings

of the Spaniards towards that family. They had come to regard the war as a national one on their part—the Austrians as intruders ; and the national independence as wound up with the support of the throne of Philip. The English were disliked as haughty heretics ; the Germans as rapacious and insulting foreigners. The Duke of Anjou increased these favourable dispositions by the magnanimous spirit which he displayed in the misfortunes of his house, and the courage with which he threw himself on the loyalty of his subjects to preserve the national independence. He declared he would tinge the soil of his beloved Castile with his own blood rather than resign his crown at the dictation of insulting foes, or even the command of his own grandfather. At the same time he promised to dismiss his French counsellors, and be directed entirely by native Spaniards. The effect of these judicious measures was immense. A national spirit was roused ; the generous flame pervaded every breast. In a grand assembly of the Castilian and Andalusian nobles it was unanimously resolved that they would not permit their monarchy to be parcelled out by England and Holland ; and that if France could no longer furnish the requisite assistance, they would rise as one man, and shed the last drop of their blood in its defence. Nor did their actions belie these magnanimous resolutions. Levies of men were ordered, and obeyed with alacrity ; contributions of plate and jewels poured in ; the priests and nobles vied with each other in rousing the national spirit ; and it soon became evident that, without the aid of an overwhelming foreign force, it would be impossible to dispossess Philip of the crown of Spain.¹

Encouraged by these powerful demonstrations of national support, Philip assumed a new and more indepen-

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20.

Affairs of
Spain in
1709. In-
creasing at-
tachment of
the Casti-
lians to
Philip.

¹ Coxe—
House of
Bourbon in
Spain, c. 16.
St Philippe,
iii. 263-309.
Coxe's
Marlb. v.
90, 91.

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21.

Independent and dignified tone assumed by Philip in the negotiations at the Hague.

dent position at the conferences in Holland. No longer sheltering himself under the tutelage of his grandfather, he appointed the Duke of Alva his plenipotentiary at the Hague, and publicly protested against the dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy. As a further proof of his independence, he addressed a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, which the latter received while engaged in the siege of Tournay, professing his willingness to enter into any reasonable terms of accommodation, consistent with the independence of Spain. These independent and vigorous steps gave Louis a colour for representing that he was inadequate to the dethronement of his grandson, and that all he could do was to withdraw his garrisons, which was only partially done. At the same time he privately conveyed to Philip his admiration of his spirited conduct in determining to defend his crown to the last extremity, and promised never to desert him.¹

¹ St Philip. iii. 274-309. Coxe—House of Bourbon, c. 16 and 17. Coxe's Marl. v. 89, 90.

22.

Operations in Aragon and on the Catalanian frontier.

The effect of these measures speedily appeared in the military operations in the Peninsula, which were reduced almost to a nullity during this year. In Catalonia the Allied forces were inferior to the enemy, so that they were compelled to remain on the defensive—the only operation of importance being an attack on Balaguer, which Stahremberg took with three battalions in presence of the French and Spanish commanders. Philip was consoled for this check by the fall of Figueras, and the surprise of an Austrian camp under the walls of Gerona, which were effected with equal skill and success by an irruption of the Duke de Noailles into the northern provinces of Catalonia, with a small French force from Roussillon.²

² Coxe, v. 90-93.

On the side of Portugal the campaign opened with

the most brilliant prospects of success, by the advance of the United British and Portuguese forces, under Lord Galway and the Marquis de Frontera, across the Alentejo, towards the Caya river, with a view to undertaking the siege of Badajoz. But the troops whom they led were not the same as those which a century after, under Wellington in the same country, achieved such glorious triumphs. In an action which took place on the banks of the Caya, the Portuguese horse, as at the battle of Almanza, took to flight, and left the infantry on either flank wholly uncovered. The result was, that, although the foot-soldiers made the most gallant defence, yet they were compelled to retreat; and two British battalions, whom Lord Galway brought up to stem the flood of disaster, were, after a heroic resistance, surrounded and made prisoners. This check, though not serious, had the effect of disorganising the whole campaign, which was converted into one of a merely defensive character on the part of the Allies.¹

These repeated defeats of the Portuguese, and their almost uniform bad conduct in action, inspired Marlborough with the most desponding views as to any further use which could be made of these auxiliaries in the Peninsula. He accordingly repeatedly and earnestly represented to the British government the impolicy of raising any additional levies in the Peninsula, and the necessity for relying entirely on the operations of veteran German or English troops.* "With their aid," said he, "I do not see how the war could last six months, con-

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23.

Operations
on the Por-
tuguese
frontier.

¹ Hist. Mil.
ix. 392, 393.
Coxe, v.
91-94.

24.

Marlbo-
rough's opi-
nion on the
Spanish
war.

* "The scheme of raising six additional regiments," says he, "can never be depended upon, nor be of any use, but for the subsisting of a few French officers; nor I believe was it ever heard of before, to be at the expense of raising new troops at the end of a war."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, July 1, 1709; COXE, v. 93.

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sidering the troops we already have in Spain, and that the remainder of the French must be recalled." For future hostilities he deemed an entire change of system necessary. He deemed it a waste of blood and treasure to limit the operations to a few frontier provinces or fortresses, but recommended the most active measures for collecting a powerful force on both sides of the Peninsula, and advancing with their united mass to Madrid. "If one-half of the money spent on this campaign," said he, "in raising new troops, had been employed in hiring old ones—that might have been of use; and you may depend upon it, the Portuguese have been too often beaten this war to do anything that may be vigorous."¹

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, July 1, and August 26, 1709. Coxe, v. 92-95.

25.
The government of the Netherlands again refused by Marlborough.

During the year 1709, the splendid offer of the government of the Netherlands was again repeatedly urged by Charles on the Duke of Marlborough, and constantly rejected by him, from the same noble and disinterested desire of avoiding giving umbrage to the States of Holland. He had also a very delicate and difficult part to play in mediating between the Dutch government and that of Great Britain: for while the former aimed at securing to themselves a strong barrier and large accession of territory in the Netherlands at the expense of Charles, they opposed strenuously the proposed cession of Minorca to England, as injurious to their commercial interests. Nor was there less difficulty in holding together the members of the Grand Alliance for warlike operations; for the cabinets, as well as their subjects, were beginning to be tired of the war, and they did not feel themselves impelled by that urgent necessity which forced Louis to make such extraordinary efforts. The King of Prussia, in particular, at the close of the campaign, renewed as usual his complaints of the

conduct of the Allies, and the little attention paid to his interests at the Hague; and not only threatened to withdraw his troops, but even to listen to separate overtures from France. Marlborough exerted himself to the utmost, and with his wonted success, to heal this alarming schism. At his request, Baron Grumbkow was sent to the Hague; and a sketch of a letter containing new offers was drawn up by the English general, which was sent to Queen Anne, copied by her, and transmitted to Berlin, with many flattering assurances. This had the effect of retaining the wayward king in the alliance.¹

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1709.

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, Dec. 21, 1709. Coxe, v. 91-101.

The total defeat of Charles XII. at Pultowa threatened to produce a defection still more alarming in the ranks of the Grand Alliance. No sooner had this event become known than a coalition was formed between the northern powers of Germany with Denmark and Russia, not only to recover the territories they had lost by the King of Sweden's conquests, but to divide his whole dominions between them. The King of Denmark made preparations for invading the western provinces of Sweden. King Augustus set out from Dresden to regain his lost dominions in Poland; and the King of Prussia joined the alliance, with the view of securing to himself Pomerania as his share of the spoils of the fallen lion. Marlborough, with his usual sagacity, instantly foresaw the danger of such an alliance, not only to the general balance of power in Europe, but to his own army in particular, from the recall to which it would lead of some of the best veteran troops in his army. He accordingly explained his views to the Pensionary Heinsius, who entirely concurred in them, and by their united efforts the threatened danger was averted.² *

26.
New confederacy in the north, and Marlborough's advice regarding it.

² Coxe, v. 98, 99.
Marlborough to Godolphin, Nov. 21, 1709.

* "If King Augustus marches for Poland, you cannot doubt its being con-

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27.

Commence-
ment of the
conferences
of Gertruy-
denberg,
April 1710.

The conferences formerly held at the Hague were renewed in the spring of 1710 at Gertruydenberg, in Holland—which became famous in history by the final rupture of the negotiations for a general peace which then took place. Vehement contests ensued from the very first, not only between the plenipotentiaries on the opposite sides, but between the ministers of the Allied powers themselves. Indeed, the divisions among the latter had now become so serious, as not only to threaten the continuance of the Grand Alliance, but to render abortive all hopes of peace, from the hopes they nourished in the breasts of the French ministers, to whom these divisions were fully known. The negotiations, however, still went on; and notwithstanding the decline of his influence at court, Marlborough again found himself practically involved in these attempts to bring about peace, over which, however, he had ceased to have any real control. Still exposed to the blasting imputation of seeking to prolong the war for his own private purposes, he was in reality doing his utmost to terminate hostilities. As the negotiation with the ostensible plenipotentiaries of the different courts was at an end—though Louis still continued to make private overtures to the Dutch, in the hope of detaching them from the confederacy—Marlborough took advantage of this circumstance to endeavour to effect an accommodation. At his request the Dutch agent, Petcum, had again repaired to Paris in the end of 1709, to resume the

certed between the three kings,—so that the Queen, in my poor opinion, should be very careful of what steps she takes : for we have in this army upwards of forty thousand men which belong to these princes ; and should they withdraw their troops, the houses of Brunswick and Holstein would be obliged to do the same, which are twenty thousand more. I need not say what consequence this would have for the advantage of France ; but I am sure you will

negotiation; and the *Marlborough Papers* contain numerous letters from him to the Duke, detailing the progress of the overtures. On the very day after Marlborough's arrival at the Hague, the plenipotentiaries made their report of the issue of the overtures; but the views of the parties were still so much at variance that it was evident no hopes of peace could be entertained. Louis was not yet sufficiently humbled to submit to the arrogant demands of the Allies, which went to strip him of nearly all his conquests; and the different powers of the confederacy were each set upon turning the general success of the Alliance to their own private advantage.¹

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Zinzendorf, on the part of Austria, insisted that not the smallest portion of the Spanish territories in Italy should be ceded to a prince of the house of Bourbon, and declared the resolution of his Imperial master to perish with arms in his hands, rather than submit to a partition which would lead to his inevitable ruin. King Charles expressed the same determination, and contended further for the cession of Roussillon, which had been wrested from Spain since the treaty of the Pyrenees. The Duke of Savoy, who aimed at the acquisition of Sicily from the spoils of the fallen monarch, was equally obstinate for the prosecution of the war. Godolphin, Somers, and the Dutch Pensionary, inclined to peace, and were willing to purchase it by the cession of Sicily and Sardinia to Louis; and Marlbo-

¹ Marlborough to Earl of Sunderland, Nov. 8, 1709. Des. iv. 647. Coxe, v. 167-169.

28.
Rigorous demands of the Allies.

do all you can for preventing the loss of these troops. The Pensioner has asked my opinion on this affair, which I have given him—That our first and principal care should be to oblige these princes *not to recall their troops*, and afterwards to concert what measures are best to be taken; but not to be hasty in taking a resolution."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, Nov. 21, 1709; COXE, v. 99.

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rough gave this his entire support, provided the evacuation of Spain, the great object of the war, could be secured. Louis, on his part, though he still resisted all propositions tending to make him himself dispossess his grandson of the crown of Spain, agreed to the appanage of Sicily and Sardinia for him, and promised to use all his efforts to induce Philip to accede to it, and in the mean time to cede four towns in Flanders as a security.* But all their efforts were in vain. The ambitious designs of Austria and Savoy prevailed over their pacific counsels; and we have the valuable authority of De Torcy, who in the former congress had accused the Duke of breaking off the negotiation, that in this year the rupture was entirely owing to the efforts of Count Zinzendorf. Marlborough, however, never ceased to long for a termination of hostilities, and took the field with a heavy heart, relieved only by the hope that one more successful campaign would give him what he so ardently desired—the rest consequent upon a general peace.¹†

¹ Note to Petcum, Aug. 10, 1710, MS. Lamberti, vi. 37-49. Coxe, v. 168, 169, 173.

29.
Real reasons of the rupture of the conferences.

Although the opposite parties seemed very nearly coming to an accommodation, yet there was, in reality, a serious and irreconcilable difference between them, which rendered it impossible. This was the resistance made to including Spain in the treaty. Louis constantly

* “Les nouveaux ordres que sa Majesté envoya à ses plenipotentiaires, les autorisaient à déclarer en son nom, qu’elle feroit tous ses efforts pour persuader au Roi d’Espagne de se contenter de regner sur les îles de Sardaigne et de Sicile, et de céder pour le bien de la paix la monarchie d’Espagne et les autres états soumis à cette couronne.”—DE TORCY, *Mémoires*, 403, edit. Petitot.

† “I am very sorry to tell you, that the behaviour of the French looks as if they had no other desire than that of carrying on the war. I hope God will bless this campaign, for I see nothing else that can *give us peace either at home or abroad*. I am so discouraged by everything I see, that I have never, during this war, gone into the field with so heavy a heart as at this time. I own to you, that the present humour in England gives me a good deal of

affirmed that he could not compel his grandson to evacuate his throne ; that, if he were inclined to do so, the Castilian nobles would not permit it ; and that all he could do was to withdraw his troops and garrisons, and furnish the Allies with pecuniary subsidies to enable them to carry on the contest in the Peninsula, which he offered to do. The Allied plenipotentiaries, on the other hand, alleged that to prevent the succession of a Bourbon prince to the throne of Spain was the main object of the war, and to leave it undone would be to lose the fruit of all its advantages ; that it was incredible that the French king, who had put his grandson on the throne of Spain, should not have influence enough to make him descend from it ; but that, if he had not, the only course left for them was to continue the war on the frontier of Flanders, and dictate the evacuation of Madrid under the walls of Paris. The spirit evinced by the Castilian nobles, and the symptoms of the war assuming a national character in Spain, only rendered it the more necessary to follow this course ; for it was easy to foresee that, in the event of hostilities ceasing elsewhere, and being continued only in the Peninsula by the Allies, the whole burden of the contest would fall on the maritime powers, by whom alone troops could be con-

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trouble ; for I cannot see how it is possible they should mend till everything is yet worse."—*Marlborough to Duchess of Marlborough*, Hague, April 14, 1710 ; COXE, v. 179.

"The chief design of France is to cause a division among the Allies. The Imperialists are very desirous of making a peace with France, upon the condition they offer of giving four cautionary towns in this country ; and the States-General are positive to put an end to the war at once, by giving the Duke of Anjou a *partage*. I am afraid the French are not ignorant of these two opinions, by which they are the better able to amuse and cheat us. Lord Townsend and I shall be sure to follow the orders we shall receive."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, March 18, 1710 ; COXE, v. 173, 174.

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veyed thither. The 37th article of the propositions of the Allies, on which the negotiation ultimately broke off, bore reference expressly to this point.* Marlborough, who was well aware of the difficulties and hazards of a Peninsular contest, which afterwards made shipwreck of the fortunes of Napoleon, was strenuous in his advice to Government to close with the offer of Sicily and Sardinia as an appanage to the Duke of Anjou, and conclude peace on the terms proposed by Louis, provided Philip would evacuate the throne of Spain. But Zinzendorf, on the part of Austria, strenuously opposed any partition of the Spanish monarchy; and the Whig ministry, deeming themselves secure of success, and hoping, in the next campaign, to conquer Madrid in Paris, supported him, contrary to the opinion of their general, in his pretensions, and broke off the negotiation.^{1†}

¹ Marlborough to King of Prussia, March 24, 1710. Coxe, v. 171. Des. iv. 701.

30.
General
plan of the
campaign
of 1710.

The plan of the campaign of 1710 was concerted by Marlborough and Eugene on a greater and more decisive scale than any which had preceded it since the commencement of the war. In the Netherlands, it was proposed to commence with the siege of Douai, a large

* The 37th article was in these terms:—"En cas que le Roi très-Chrétien exécute tout ce que a été dit ci-dessus, et que la monarchie d'Espagne soit rendue et cédée au Roi Charles III., comme il est accordé par ces articles, dans le temps stipulé, on a accordé que la cessation d'armes, entre les armées des hautes parties en guerre, continuera jusqu'à la conclusion et la ratification des traités de paix à faire."—*Histoire de Marlborough*, iii. 178.

† "During the remaining transactions of the intended peace, which was laid in all its steps before the whole Cabinet, Lord-Treasurer, Lord-President Somers, and all other lords, did ever seem confident of a peace. My own distrust was so remarkable that I was once perfectly chid by the Lord-Treasurer for saying, such orders would be proper if the French king signed the preliminary treaty. He resented my making any question of it, and said there could be no doubt, &c. For my part, nothing but seeing so great men believe it could ever incline me to think France reduced so low as to accept such conditions."—COWPER'S *Diary*. COXE, v. 171, 172.

and important fortress on the Scheldt, which was connected by water-communication even with Amsterdam, and admirably calculated on that account, as well as its great strength, to form a base for operations, and *place d'armes* for the invasion of France. When it was subdued, the Allies were to direct their arms to Arras, the *last* in the triple line of fortresses which covered the French frontier on the north, and which would lay open the direct road to Paris. From thence the Allies were to advance to Calais and Abbeville, which was to be aided by an attack from the coast, and which would open the way for supplies from Great Britain. The possession of these fortresses, giving the Allies a secure base for operations connected both with Holland and England, would, it was thought, enable them to threaten Paris in the next campaign; or, if their terms were not acceded to, to advance at once and dictate peace under its walls. To aid this grand effort, subordinate expeditions were to be undertaken in the south of France by an invasion from Piedmont, in concert with a descent of English troops on the coast of Languedoc—in connection with which, communications had been opened with the disaffected in the Cevennes Mountains.¹

The secret camarilla which directed the Queen's councils, dreading the influence of Marlborough in England, were anxious for an opportunity of getting rid of him, and for this purpose took the earliest opportunity of sending him to Holland to superintend the negotiations in person. In answer to an address from the Commons, the Queen observed, "I am very well pleased with this declaration of your just sense of the Duke of Marlborough's eminent services, which I am so fully convinced of that I shall always esteem him as God Almighty's

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¹ Coxe, v.
177-179.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
190-192.
Rousset, ii.
288, 289.

31.
Marlbo-
rough's de-
parture for
the Conti-
nent, and
arrival at
the Hague.

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chief instrument of my glory, and my people's happiness, and I will give the necessary orders for sending him immediately into Holland." When the Duke, in pursuance of these orders, commenced his journey to the place of embarkation, in passing through the streets of the capital his carriage was surrounded by multitudes, who expressed their regret for his departure ; and many even presented petitions, requesting him not to leave the country during the tumult and agitation which had taken place, in consequence of the preparations for Sacheverell's trial. The Duke, however, deemed his public duty paramount to every other consideration, and proceeded without delay to the place of his destination—though well aware that, in his absence, nothing would be left undone which could lead to his overthrow, and, with it, that of the whole objects for which the war had been prosecuted.¹

¹ Coxe, v.
150, 151.

32.
Commence-
ment of the
campaign
agreed on
between
Eugene and
Marlbo-
rough.

War being resolved on, Marlborough and Eugene met at Tournay on the 28th April, and commenced the campaign by besieging the fort of Mortagne, which capitulated on the same day. Their force already amounted to sixty thousand men, and as the troops were daily coming up from their cantonments, it was expected soon to amount to double that number. The plan of operations was soon settled between these two great men ; no difference of opinion ever occurred between them, no jealousy ever marred their co-operation. They determined to commence serious operations by attacking Douai—a strong fortress, and one of the last of the first order which, in that quarter, guarded the French territory. To succeed in this, however, it was necessary to pass the French lines, which were of great strength, and were guarded by Marshal Montes-

quieu at the head of forty battalions and twenty squadrons. Douai itself was also strongly protected both by nature and art. On the one side lay the Haine and the Scarpe; in the centre was the canal of Douai; on the other side were the lines of La Bassée, which had been strengthened with additional works since the close of the campaign. Marlborough was very sanguine of success, as the French force was not yet collected, and he was considerably superior in number; and he wrote to Godolphin on the same night,—“The orders are given for marching this night, so that I hope my next will give you an account of our being in Artois.”¹

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¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, April 20, 1710. Coxe, v. 182. Hist. de Marl. iii. 190, 191. Rousset, ii. 289.

The Duke operated at once by both wings. On the one wing he detached the Prince of Würtemberg, with fifteen thousand men, by Pont-à-Tessin to Pont-à-Vendin, where the French lines met the Dyle and the canal of Douai; while on the other Prince Eugene moved forward Count Fels, with a considerable corps, towards Pont Auby on the same canal. The whole army followed in two columns, the left commanded by Eugene and the right by Marlborough. The English general secured the passage at Pont-à-Vendin without resistance; and Eugene, though baffled at Pont Auby, succeeded in getting over the canal at Sant and Courières without serious loss. The first defences were thus forced; and that night the two wings, having formed a junction, lay on their arms in the plain of Lens, while Montesquieu precipitately retired behind the Scarpe, in the neighbourhood of Vitry. Next morning the troops, overjoyed at their success, continued their advance. Montesquieu fell back behind the Senyet. Marlborough sent forward General Cadogan, at the head of the English troops, to Pont-à-Rache,

33.
Passage of the lines of the Scarpe, April 28.

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1710.

¹ Marlborough to the Duchess, April 21, 1710, Coxe, v. 184; and to Mr Stanhope, April 25, 1710. Des. v. 7. Hist. de Marl. iii. 191.

to circumscribe the garrison of Douai, on the canal of Marchiennes, on the north; while Eugene, encamping on the other side of the Scarpe, completed the investment on the west. The perfect success of this enterprise without any loss was matter of equal surprise and joy to the Duke, who wrote to the Duchess in the highest strain of satisfaction at his bloodless triumph. It was entirely owing to the suddenness and secrecy of his movements, which took the enemy completely unawares; for, had the enterprise been delayed four days longer, its issue would have been extremely doubtful, and thousands of men must, at all events, have been sacrificed.^{1*}

34.
Description
of Douai.

Douai, which was immediately invested after this success, is a fortress of considerable strength, in the second line which covers the French province of Artois. Less populous than Lille, it embraces a wider circuit within its ample walls. Its principal defence consists in the marshes, which, on the side of Tournay, where the attack might be expected, render it extremely difficult of approach, especially in the rainy season. Access to it is defended by Fort Scarpe, a powerful outwork, capable of standing a separate siege. Douai was taken by Louis XIV. in 1667, and secured to him by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. The walls are irregular, and several old towers are of ancient construction;

* "In my last I had but just time to tell you we had passed the lines. I hope this happy beginning will produce such success this campaign as must put an end to the war. I bless God for putting it into their heads not to defend their lines; for at Pont-à-Vendin, when I passed, the Marshal d'Artagnan was with twenty thousand men, which, if he had stayed, must have rendered the event very doubtful. But, God be praised, we are come without the loss of any men. The excuse the French make is, that we came four days before they expected us."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, 21st April 1710; Coxe, ix. 184.

but the ditch was deep and full of water, and the covered-way in excellent condition. The Scarpe, which takes its rise some leagues from Arras, flows through its walls, and augments the difficulty of attack, because its inundations are so extensive as to render very long lines of circumvallation necessary. The garrison consisted of eight thousand men under the command of the Marquis Albergotti, an officer of the highest talent and bravery ; and under him were the renowned Valory, to direct the engineers, and the not less celebrated Chevalier de Jaucourt, to command the artillery. From a fortress of such strength, so defended, the most resolute resistance might be expected, and no efforts were spared on the part of the Allied generals to overcome it.¹

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¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
191, 192.
Coxe, v.
185, 186.
Rousset, ii.
291.

The investment was completed on the 4th, and the trenches opened on the 5th May. On the 7th, the head of the sap was advanced to within two hundred and fifty yards of the exterior palisades : but the besiegers that night experienced a severe check from a vigorous sally of the besieged with twelve hundred men, by which two English regiments were nearly cut to pieces. But, on the 9th, a great train of artillery, consisting of two hundred pieces, with a large supply of ammunition, arrived from Tournay ; on the 11th, the advanced works were strongly armed, and the batteries were pushed up to the covered-way, where they thundered across the ditch against the rampart. The imminent danger of this important stronghold now seriously alarmed the French court ; and Marshal Villars, who commanded their great army on the Flemish frontier, received the most positive orders to advance to its relief. By great exertions, he had now collected one hundred and fifty-three battalions and two

35.
Its invest-
ment and
siege, which
Villars tries
to raise,
May 11.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
195-198.
Coxe, v. 186.
Rousset, ii.
291, 292.

36.
Anecdotes
illustrative
of the chiv-
alous char-
acter of
the age.

² Mém.
d'Avrigny,
iv. 313-320.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
194-198.

hundred and sixty-two squadrons, which were pompously announced as mustering one hundred and sixty thousand combatants, and certainly amounted to more than ninety thousand. The best generals in France were under his orders. Marshal Berwick and Marshal Montesquieu aided him in his labours, to which the severe wound he had received at Malplaquet rendered him scarcely equal. The Allied force was almost exactly equal in battalions and squadrons: it consisted of one hundred and fifty-five battalions and two hundred and sixty-one squadrons; but the number of men was less than that of the French, being only eighty thousand.¹

During the progress of this siege, two events occurred singularly characteristic of the chivalric feelings which still lingered in the breasts of the warriors on either side. The camp equipage of Prince Eugene, comprising his whole plate and presents recently received from the King of Prussia, valued at £10,000 sterling, fell into the hands of a French partisan from Namur, who brought the rich booty safe into that fortress. But as soon as Louis XIV. heard of the circumstance, he ordered the whole to be restored to Eugene, which was accordingly done. This act was the more magnanimous that Eugene was connected, by his mother's side, with the French court, and had only left the French king's service because he had been refused a regiment. And the Cardinal Bouillon, the nephew of Turenne and friend of Fénélon, wearied of his long disgrace at the French court, set out from Arras, and sought refuge in Marlborough's camp, where he was met by his uncle, the Prince of Auvergne, at the head of five-and-twenty squadrons, and most hospitably received!² Strange mixture of ferocity and

courtesy, of determination to ruin and yet anxiety to save, which in every age has distinguished the manners of chivalry, and softened the horrors of war by the graces and benevolence of peace.

Villars broke up from the vicinity of Cambray on the 21st May, and, moving by Artois across the Scarpe into the plain of Lens, advanced in great strength towards Douai. The soldiers were all provided with bread for four days ; and in his letters to his friends he expressed his determination to give battle rather than see Douai fall. Marlborough and Eugene immediately made the most vigorous preparations to receive him. Thirty battalions only were left to prosecute the siege ; twelve squadrons were placed in observation at Pont-à-Rache ; and the remainder of the army, about sixty thousand strong, was concentrated in a strong position on the left bank of the Scarpe, extending from Vitry on the left to Montigny on the right, so as to cover the siege, on which all the resources of art, so far as the short time would admit, had been lavished. Everything was prepared for a mighty struggle. The whole guns were mounted on batteries four hundred paces from each other ; the infantry was drawn up in a single line along the intrenchment, and filled up the entire interval between the artillery ; the cavalry were arranged in two lines, seven hundred paces in rear of the foot-soldiers. It seemed another Malplaquet, in which the relative position of the two armies was reversed, and the French were to storm the intrenched position of the Allies. Every man in both armies expected a decisive battle ; and Marlborough, who was heartily tired of the war, wrote to the Duchess that he hoped for victory, which should at once end the war, and restore him to private

CHAP.
VIII.
1710.

37.
Both armies
expect another battle.

CHAP.

VIII.

1710.

¹ Villars' Mem. ii. 111, 112. Hist. de Marl. iii. 203-205. Rousset, ii. 292-294.

life.* Villars, on his side, wrote to the Duke of Maine: "I am going to play a great game. I hope to find success in the heel, since I have it not in the hand. The newspapers give the enemy forty thousand men more than us, so that I hope they will spare us the half of the journey. If they do not do me that honour, I will seek them, and attack them, if they are not intrenched to the teeth. I will undertake nothing contrary to the rules of good sense; but if I can lay my claws upon them, I shall not fail to do so."¹

38.
Villars retires without fighting.

Yet there was no battle. The lustre of Blenheim and Ramilies played round Marlborough's bayonets, and the recollection of Turin tripled the effective force of Eugene's squadrons. Villars advanced on the 1st June, with all the pomp and circumstance of war, to within musket-shot of the Allied position; and he had not only the authority, but the recommendation, of Louis to hazard a battle. He boasted that his force amounted to a hundred and sixty thousand men. But he did not venture to make the attack. Berwick concurred with Villars in thinking that the Allied position was impregnable, and that nothing could be done but to prevent the enemy from making other conquests after the fall of Douai. To Marlborough's great regret, the French retired without fighting; and the English general, at the age of threescore, was left to pursue the fatigues and the labours of a protracted campaign, in which, for the first time in his life, he was doubtful of success, from knowing the malignant eyes with which he was regarded by the ruling

* "I hope God will so bless our efforts, that if the Queen should not be so happy as to have a prospect of peace before the opening of the next session of parliament, she and all her subjects may be convinced we do our best here in the army to put a speedy and good period to this bloody war."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, May 12, 1710; *Desp.*

"I hear of so many disagreeable things, that make it very reasonable, both

faction in his own country. "I long," said he, "for an end of the war, so God's will be done. Whatever the event may be, I shall have nothing to reproach myself with, having with all my heart done my duty, and being hitherto blessed with more success than was ever known before. My wishes and duty are the same; but I can't say I have the same prophetic spirit I used to have; for in all the former actions I never did doubt of success, we having had constantly the great blessing of being of one mind. I cannot say it is so now, for I fear some are run so far into villanous faction, that it would more content them to see us beaten; but if I live, I will be watchful that it shall not be in their power to do much hurt. The discourse of the Duke of Argyll is, that when I please there will then be peace. I suppose his friends speak the same language in England; so that I must every summer venture my life in a battle, and be found fault with in winter for not bringing home peace. *No, I wish for it with all my heart and soul.*"¹

Villars having retired without fighting, the operations of the siege were resumed with redoubled vigour. On the 16th June, signals of distress were sent up from the town, which the French marshal perceived, and he made in consequence a show of returning by the right bank of the Scarpe, to interrupt the siege; but his movements came to nothing. Marlborough, to counteract his manœuvres, repassed the Scarpe at Vitry, and took up a position directly barring the line of advance of the

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, May 26, and June 2, 1710. Marlborough to the Duchess, June 12, 1710. Coxe, v. 197. Berwick's Mem. 161—ed. Petitot.

39.
Fall of
Donai,
June 26.

for myself and you, to take no steps but what may lead to a quiet life. This being the case, am I not to be pitied that am every day in danger of exposing my life for the good of those who are seeking my ruin? God's will be done. If I can be so blessed as to end this campaign with success, things must very much alter to persuade me to come again at the head of the army."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, 19th May 1710; COXE, v. 191, 192.

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VIII.
1710.

French marshal, while Eugene prosecuted the siege. Villars again retired without fighting. On the 19th the Prince of Orange made an assault, under the eyes of Eugene and Marlborough, on two ravelins and a half-moon; but, after a desperate struggle, he was repulsed with the loss of seven hundred men. The attack was renewed by the Prince on the 24th, and the breach carried in spite of the explosion of several mines, which blew up with terrific effect. The Prince of Anhalt, on the same day, carried another ravelin. On the 22d the fort of Scarpe was breached, and the sap was advanced to the counterscarp of the fortress, the walls of which were violently shaken; and on the 26th, Albergotti, who had no longer any hope of being relieved, and who saw preparations made for a general assault, capitulated with the garrison, now reduced to four thousand five hundred men. This siege was the most bloody, next to that of Lille, of any in the war, for it cost the Allies eight thousand men.¹

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, June 26, 1710. Des. v. 54. Rousset, ii. 294. Hist. de Marl. iii. 206.

40.
The Allies are unable to reach Arras, but besiege Bethune, July 15.

On the surrender of Douai, the Allied generals intended to besiege Arras, the *last* of the triple line of fortresses which on that side covered France, and between which and Paris no fortified place remained to arrest the march of an invader. On the 10th July, Marlborough crossed the Scarpe at Vitry, and, joining Eugene, their united forces, nearly ninety thousand strong, advanced towards Arras. But Villars, who felt the extreme importance of this last stronghold, had exerted himself to the utmost for its defence. He had long employed his troops on the construction of new lines of great strength on the Crinchon, stretching from Arras to the Somme, and he had here collected nearly a hundred thousand men, and a hundred and thirty pieces of cannon. This position was selected with great

ability, so as entirely to bar the approach to Arras ; and at the same time it was in itself so strong, and so strengthened by the resources of art, as to render it extremely hazardous to attempt an attack. After reconnoitring this position, the Allied generals concurred in thinking that it was equally impossible to force it, and to undertake the siege of Arras while the enemy, in such strength and so strongly posted, lay on its flank.* Their first intention, on finding themselves baffled in this project, was to seize Hesden on the Canhec, which would have left the enemy no strong place between them and the coast. But the skilful dispositions of Villars, who on this occasion displayed uncommon abilities and foresight, rendered this design abortive, and it was therefore determined to attack Bethune. This place, which was surrounded with very strong works, was garrisoned by nine thousand men, under the command of M. Puy Vauban, nephew of the celebrated marshal of the same name. But as an attack on it had not been expected, the necessary supplies for a protracted resistance had not been fully introduced when the investment was completed on the 15th July.¹

CHAP.
VIII.
1710.

¹ Coxe, v.
292-294.
Rousset, ii.
296. Consid.
sur la
Camp. de
1710, par
Villars, 172.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
214, 215.

* "Our project was to have attacked Arras as soon as the siege of Douai was over ; but the French having drawn together many more troops than we could have imagined, which gives them certainly a great superiority as to their numbers, which will make another siege impossible till we have obliged them to send some of their troops into garrisons, or decided the fate of Europe by a battle. I thank God I have my health ; but what I hear from your side of the water gives me so much uneasiness that I am not so fully pleased with those sanguine thoughts as formerly, that God would protect and bless us : but with all my soul I pray He may, and shall very freely venture my life that we may have success, which is necessary not only for preventing the ruin of England, but of all Europe : for should the French get the better, you may depend upon it that Holland is so alarmed by our divisions in England that they would consent to whatever France should insist upon."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, June 2, 1710 ; Coxe, v. 196.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

41.

Great skill
with which
Villars
averted the
invasion of
France on
this occa-
sion. Fall
of Bethune,
August 28.

¹ Villars'
Mem. ii.
119-125.
Marlbo-
rough to
Godolphin,
Aug. 29 and
30, 1710.
Des. v. 116.
Coxe, v.
294. Hist.
de Marl.
iii. 216.

Villars, upon seeing the point of attack now fully declared, moved in eight columns upon Hobarques, near Montenencourt. Eugene and Marlborough upon this assembled their covering army, and changed their front, taking up a new line stretching from Mont St Eloi to Le Comte. Upon advancing to reconnoitre the enemy, Marlborough discovered that the French, instead of advancing to raise the siege, were busy constructing a new set of lines, which stretched across the plain from the rivulet Ugie, towards the Somme, and the centre of which, at Avesnes le Comte, was already strongly fortified. It now appeared how much Villars had gained by the skilful measures which had diverted the Allies from their projected attack upon Arras. It lay upon the direct road to Paris. Bethune, though of importance to the ultimate issue of the war, was not of the same present moment. It lay on the flank on the second line, while Arras was in front, and was the only remaining fortress in the last. By means of the new lines which he had constructed, the able French marshal had erected a fresh protection for his country, when its last defences were wellnigh broken through. By simply holding them, the interior of France was covered from incursion, time was gained not only for raising fresh armaments in the interior for its defence, but, what was of more importance to Louis, for waiting the issue of the intrigues in England, which were soon expected to overthrow the Whig cabinet. Villars, on this occasion, proved the salvation of his country, and justly raised himself to the very highest rank among its military commanders. His measures were the more to be commended that they exposed him to the obloquy of leaving Bethune to its fate.¹ In truth, Villars' men were so discouraged that

it was to the last degree hazardous to attempt anything with them. "Lacouture," said he, "called money 'the star of gaiety,' but unhappily that star does not shine very bright in our firmament. The bread of the soldiers, too, is execrable; the desertion is great: one reason is, that in winter the soldiers die of famine, and in summer are killed: it is not surprising that such a life is not very popular."

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The trenches were opened before Bethune on the night of the 23d July. Fagel conducted the attack on the bastion of St Ignatius, where there was only one covered way; Schulemberg on the gate of Aire, where there were two. The confederates sustained a severe loss the next night from a sortie of the garrison, which cost them eight hundred men, besides having all their works levelled with the ground. Schulemberg, however, pushed his approaches with vigour and success. On the 12th August, a reinforcement of six, on the 20th of twelve battalions, strengthened the besiegers; and although the besieged made two vigorous sallies, which were only repelled with a loss of a thousand men, their progress was very perceptible. Fagel, on his side, had pushed the sap up to the palisades of the outworks; Schulemberg had made himself master of the counter-scarp, and battered in breach the rampart. The besiegers were preparing to fill up the ditch. The garrison, weakened by its long and gallant defence, had nearly exhausted its ammunition and provisions; balls even were awaiting for the guns. In these circumstances, M. de Vauban, after thirty-five days of open trenches, beat the *chamade*—"the sad signal," says the French annalist, "which terminated all the sieges undertaken by Marlborough;" and the garrison, now reduced to

42.
Siege and
fall of Be-
thune, Aug.
28.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

¹ Rousset,
ii. 296, 297.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
218-221.

fifteen hundred men and nine hundred wounded, was conducted, with the honours of war, to St Omer. When the white flag was hoisted, and the firing ceased, the French governor appeared on the ramparts; Marlborough hastened to the counterscarp, and from thence the two commanders saluted each other with mutual marks of respect and admiration.¹

43.
Increasing
animosity
to Marl-
borough in
England.
He intends
to besiege
Calais.

Notwithstanding the loss of so many fortresses on the endangered frontier of his territory, Louis XIV. was so much encouraged by what he knew of the great change which was going on in the councils of Queen Anne, that, expecting daily an entire revolution in the ministry, and the overthrow of the war party in the cabinet, he resolved on the most vigorous prosecution of the contest. He made clandestine overtures to the secret advisers of the Queen, in the hope of establishing that separate negotiation which at no distant period proved so successful. Torcy, the Duke's enemy, triumphantly declared, "what we lose in Flanders, we shall gain in England." To frustrate these machinations, and, if possible, rouse the national feeling more strongly in favour of a vigorous prosecution of the war, Marlborough determined to lay siege to Aire and St Venant, which, though off the line of direct attack on France, laid open the way to Calais, which, if supported at home, he hoped to reduce before the conclusion of the campaign.* He entertained the most sanguine

* "I am of opinion that, after the siege of Aire, I shall have it in my power to attack Calais. This is a conquest which would very much prejudice France, and ought to have a good effect for the Queen's service in England; but I see so much malice levelled at me that I am afraid it is not safe for me to make any proposition, lest, if it should not succeed, my enemies should turn it to my disadvantage."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, 11th August 1710; COXE, v. 343.

hopes of success from this design, which was warmly approved of by Godolphin ; but he received at this time such discouraging accounts of the precarious condition of his influence at court, that he justly concluded he would not receive adequate support from England, out of which the main supplies for the enterprise must be drawn. He, in concert with Eugene, therefore, wisely resolved to forego this dazzling but perilous project for the present, and to content himself with the solid advantages, unattended with risk, of reducing Aire and St Venant.¹

CHAP.
VIII.
1710.

¹ Rousset,
ii. 298.
Coxe, v.
343. Hist.
de Marl.
iii. 223, 224.

Having taken their resolution, the confederate generals began their march in the beginning of September, and on the 6th of that month both places were invested. Aire, which is comparatively of small extent, was garrisoned by only two thousand seven hundred men ; but St Venant was a place of great size and strength, and had a garrison of fourteen battalions of foot and three regiments of dragoons, mustering eight thousand combatants. They were under the command of the Count de Guebriant, a brave and skilful commander. Both were at this time protected by inundations, which retarded extremely the operations of the besiegers, the more especially as the autumnal rains had set in early this year, and with more than usual severity. While anxiously awaiting the cessation of this obstacle, and the arrival of a great convoy of heavy cannon and ammunition which was coming up from Ghent, the Allied generals received the disheartening intelligence of the total defeat of this important convoy, which, though guarded by sixteen hundred men, was attacked and destroyed by a French corps on the 19th September. This loss affected Marlborough the more

44.
Siege and
capture of
St Venant,
Sept. 29.

Sept. 19.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

¹ Rousset,
ii. 299.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
226, 227.

45.
And of
Aire, Nov.
12.

sensibly, that it was the first disaster of moment which had befallen him during nine years of incessant warfare.* But notwithstanding this loss, St Venant was so severely pressed by the fire of the besiegers, under the Prince of Orange, who conducted the operations with uncommon vigour and ability, that the garrison was compelled to capitulate on the 29th, on condition of being conducted to St Omer, not to serve again till regularly exchanged.¹

Aire still held out, as the loss of the convoy from Ghent, and the dreadful rains which fell almost without intermission during the whole of October, very greatly retarded the progress of the siege. The garrison, too, under the command of the brave governor, made a most resolute defence. Sickness prevailed to a great extent in the Allied army; the troops were for the most part up to the knees in mud and water; and the rains, which fell night and day for weeks together without intermission, precluded the possibility of finding a dry place for their lodging. It was absolutely necessary, however, to continue the siege; for, independent of the credit of the army being staked on its success, it had become impossible, as Marlborough himself said, to draw the cannon from the trenches.† In addition to this, Eugene had hesitated as to undertaking the siege so late in the season, in a country so low, and exposed to inundations; and Marlborough

* "Till within these few days, during these *nine years*, I have never had occasion to send ill news. Our powder and other stores, for the carrying on these two sieges, left Ghent last Thursday, under the convoy of twelve hundred foot and four hundred and fifty horse. They were attacked by the enemy and beaten, so that they blew up the power, and sunk the store-boats."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, 22d September 1710; COXE, v. 365.

† "Take it we must, for we cannot draw the guns from the batteries. But God knows when we shall have it; night and day our poor men are up to the knees in mud and water."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, 27th October 1710.

therefore felt his own credit implicated in its reduction. The perseverance of the Allied commanders was at length rewarded by success. On the 12th November the fortress capitulated, and the garrison, still 3628 strong, marched out prisoners, leaving sixteen hundred sick and wounded in the town, after having sustained, with great resolution, no less than forty-eight days of open trenches. This conquest, which concluded the campaign, was, however, dearly purchased by the loss of nearly seven thousand men killed and wounded in the Allied ranks, exclusive of the sick, who, amidst those pestilential marshes, had now swelled to double that number.¹

CHAP.

VIII.

1710.

¹ Marlborough to St John, Nov. 13, 1710. Des. v. 221. Coxe, v. 366, 367. Hist. de Marl. iii. 229-236.

Although the capture of four such important fortresses as Douai, Bethune, St Venant, and Aire, with their garrisons, amounting nearly to thirty thousand men, who had been taken in them during the campaign, was a most substantial advantage, and could not fail to have a most important effect on the final issue of the war, yet these results were not productive of so much national exultation as the victories of the preceding campaigns. There had been no brilliant victory like Blenheim, Ramilies, or Oudenarde, to silence envy and defy malignity; the successes, though little less real, had not been so dazzling. The intriguers about the court, the malcontents in the country, eagerly seized on this circumstance to calumniate the Duke, and accused him of unworthy motives in the conduct of the war: he was protracting it for his own private purposes, reducing it to a strife of lines and sieges, when he might at once terminate it by a decisive battle, and gratifying his ruling passion of avarice by the lucrative appointments which he enjoyed himself, or divided among his friends.

46.
Increase of Marlborough's difficulties at home.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

47.
General
alarm at the
augmenta-
tion of the
public bur-
dens.

The great increase in the public burdens of the country, a subject which never fails to find a responsive echo in the English breast, added tenfold weight to these representations. Such was the clamour against the augmentation of the public debt and taxes that it had become absolutely stunning. It must be confessed there was great foundation for the complaints so generally made on this subject. The annual expenditure of the nation in the last year of the reign of James II. had been, as Bolingbroke tells us, about £2,000,000; and the supplies voted by the Commons had already for several years been £6,000,000, and had this year reached the unprecedented amount of £7,000,000. Large loans were annually contracted, the interest of which was not only burdensome in itself, but threatened, as it was thought, at no distant period, entirely to swallow up the whole landed and realised property of the country. Men could see no end to this constant increase of taxation, and such additions to the public debt. They began to think they might pay too dear for glory, for independence, or even for freedom. The public debt, which was only £664,000 at the Revolution, had since increased so rapidly that it was swelled by £16,000,000 during the reign of William, and that contracted in the reign of Anne already exceeded £34,000,000, while at her death it amounted to £37,000,000.* The public

	Debt.	Interest.	Revenue.
* National Debt at the Revolution, Increase during William's reign,	£664,253 15,730,439	£39,865 1,271,087	£2,001,865
Debt at Anne's accession, Increase during Anne's reign,	16,394,702 37,750,661	1,310,652 2,040,416	
Debt at death of Anne,	54,145,363	3,351,368	5,641,803

—ALISON'S *Europe*, v. 538. *Revenue Tables*, 70-89.

taxes had nearly tripled during the same period. Where, it was asked, is this to end? Of twenty-two years which have elapsed since the Revolution, eighteen have been spent in constant and expensive wars. What national resources, what public freedom, can stand such a strain?

"It is impossible," says Bolingbroke, "to look back without indignation at the mysterious iniquity by which this system has been matured, or horror to the consequences that may ensue from it. The ordinary expenses of government are defrayed, even in time of peace, in great part by anticipations and mortgages. In time of peace—in days of prosperity, as we boast them to be—we contract new debts, we create new funds. What must happen when we go to war, or are in national distress? What will happen when we have mortgaged and funded all we have to mortgage and fund—when we have mortgaged all the produce of land, and all the land itself? Who can answer that, when we come to such extremities, or have them more nearly in prospect, ten millions of people will consent to be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, to maintain the two-hundredth part of that number in ease and plenty? Who can answer that the whole body of the people will suffer themselves to be treated, in favour of a handful of men, as the poor Indians are in favour of the Spaniards; to be parcelled out in lots, as it were, and to be assigned, like these Indians to the Spanish planters, to toil and starve for the proprietors of the several funds?" Probably most persons will be of opinion that these questions suggest matter for serious and anxious thought, even with all the experience we have since had of the prodigious resources which the industry and activity of Great

CHAP.

VIII.

1710.

48.
Argument
of Boling-
broke on
the subject.

CHAP.

VIII.

1710.

¹ Dissert.
on Parties,
Boling-
broke's
Works, iii.
296, 297—
edit. 1809.

Britain can develop. It may be conceived, then, what a sensation they produced, when the funding system, introduced with the Revolution, was yet in its infancy ; when the capability of the nation to bear an increase of burdens was unknown, and when all the obloquy arising from so rapid and alarming an increase of the public debts and burdens was, alike by friends and enemies, directed against the victorious general, who alone, it was said, profited by them !¹

49.
Real causes
of the evils
complained
of.

And in truth Marlborough bore the brunt of the whole. Yet nothing could be more unjust than this concentration of the public discontent on his head, when in reality the evils complained of were the direct and unavoidable consequences of the great convulsion by which the family on the throne had been changed. It was no fault of Marlborough that the nation, since the Revolution, had been involved in almost constant wars ; they had only to thank him for having rendered them for the last ten years constantly successful. The real cause of the warfare, and of the enormous increase of the debt to which it had given rise, was the ambition of Louis XIV., which had arrayed all Europe in a league against him, and the Revolution of 1688, which had placed England at its head. Great as had been, and were destined to be, the benefits of that change, it was attended in the first instance by most disastrous consequences. No nation, even for the most just of causes, can overturn an existing government without suffering deeply for it, especially in its pecuniary interests. France felt this bitterly after its two successful revolutions in 1789 and 1830 ; England felt it with almost equal severity after the expulsion of the Stuarts. The “unbought loyalty of men, the cheap defence of nations,”

was at an end. Generous attachment to the crown being no longer to be relied on, the foundations of government required to be laid in the selfish interests of its supporters. Corruption on a great scale became necessary to maintain the authority of government; the contraction of debt became a part of its policy, to interest the public creditors in the existing order of things. Parliamentary influence had come in place of prerogative. The king did nothing of his own authority; but he got an obsequious Parliament to do whatever he desired. The national debt and public taxes grew alike with the external dangers and internal insecurity of the new government. These evils had no connection with Marlborough; but they were all imputed to him, because of his great influence and colossal fame, and because he was the visible head of the war party. Hence the general obloquy with which he was assailed. Men will impute evils under which they suffer to anything but the real cause—their own conduct.

But it was not only among the populace and his political opponents that these prejudices prevailed; his greatness and fame had become an object of envy to his own party. Orford, Wharton, and Halifax had on many occasions evinced their distrust of him; and even Somers, who had long stood his friend, was inclined to think the power of the Duke of Marlborough too great, and the emoluments and offices of his family and connections immoderate. The Duchess inflamed the discord between him and the Queen, by positively refusing to come to any reconciliation with her rival, Mrs Masham. The discord increased daily, and great were the efforts made to aggravate it. To the Queen, the never-failing device was adopted of representing the victorious general

CHAP.

VIII.

1710.

50.
Envy of
him among
his own
party.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

as lording it over the throne ; as likely to eclipse even the crown by the lustre of his fame ; as too dangerous and powerful a subject for a sovereign to tolerate. Matters came to such a pass, in the course of the summer of 1710, that Marlborough found himself thwarted in every request he made, in every project he proposed ; and he had serious thoughts of resigning his command, but was dissuaded by his friends, who were well aware that such a step would lead to the immediate downfall of their party, and introduce one to power which would at once abandon the whole objects of the Grand Alliance. He retained the command, therefore, from a sense of duty, and with great reluctance ; and expressed his acquiescence with the emphatic expression, that he was a "mere sheet of white paper, upon which his friends might write what they pleased."¹

¹ Marlborough to the Duchess, July 26, 1710. Coxe, v. 203. Cunningham, ii. 279-282. Conduct, 230.

51.
Final interview of the Queen and the Duchess of Marlborough.

Matters between the Queen and the Duchess were brought to a final issue on 3d April 1710, when they had a final interview. This favour was only awarded by her Majesty after repeated requests, and, as Marlborough had predicted of all interviews where mutual reproaches were the principal theme, ended only in widening the breach. She was kept waiting long in the antechamber, and, on being admitted, the Queen said to her, with some embarrassment, "I was just going to write to you: whatever you have to say, put it in writing." The Duchess remonstrated against not being permitted to state it verbally ; and added, "There are those about your Majesty who have charged me with saying things which I am no more capable of than I am of killing my own children : I never speak of your Majesty but in company, and then always with due respect."—"Without doubt," rejoined the Queen, "there

are many lies told." "I only beg," replied the Duchess, "that you will inform me of what particulars I have been accused; because this only can enable me to clear myself. I am confident your Majesty would not treat me with so much harshness, if you could believe that my only object is to do myself justice, and not to ask a favour."—"You desired no answer," replied the Queen, "and you shall have none."* The Duchess still continued to remonstrate; upon which the Queen again said, "You desired no answer, and you shall have none. I will quit the room." Upon this the Duchess burst into a flood of tears, and anxiously besought the Queen to tell her who were her accusers; but she could obtain no other answer but the words, "You desired no answer, and shall have none." Perceiving it fruitless to continue the contest, the Duchess made her obeisance, and said, "I am confident you will suffer in this world and the next for this inhumanity."—"That is my business," replied the Queen, and the Duchess withdrew.¹

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¹ Conduct,
233-244.
Marlbo-
rough's Pri-
vate Corres.
i. 295.
Coxe, v.
205-207.

After such a scene, which too literally fulfilled all Marlborough's predictions as to the utter fruitlessness of all attempts, by explanations, to reconcile hearts which once were united, and have become severed, it was impossible that even the terms of ordinary civility could be kept up; and, accordingly, they never met again. The same post which brought to the Duke, at the commencement of his diplomatic career at the Hague, the account of this painful scene, brought the intelligence of the unexpected appointment of the Duke of Shrewsbury to the office of Lord-Chamberlain, without the concurrence, or even suspicion, of any member of the administration.

52.
Appoint-
ment of
the Duke
of Shrews-
bury as
Lord-Cham-
berlain by
the Queen
alone.

* Alluding to an expression in the Duchess's letter, that all she had to say in her vindication would not oblige the Queen to answer her.

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This was a decisive proof that the Queen was governed by secret counsellors apart from her official advisers, for the office of Lord-Chamberlain is too important a situation in any, but especially a Queen's palace, to be ever disposed of but by the responsible ministers of the crown. Harley, who by this important change was paving the way for an entire change of administration, never displayed his extreme judgment and tact more than in this appointment. Of all the noblemen in England, Shrewsbury was the most remarkable for politeness of demeanour, suavity of manners, and conciliatory temper. King William used to say of him, he was "the only minister that pleased both Whig and Tory;" and from his general popularity he was designated the "King of Hearts." He was a man of honour and probity, as well as most engaging manners, and having been a prime mover in the Revolution, had been appointed, soon after it, Secretary of State in the Whig cabinet. In the close of King William's reign, however, he withdrew from politics, and retired to Rome; and though earnestly pressed by Godolphin and Marlborough to take office, he still declined to do so, though he intrusted Marlborough with his proxy in the House of Lords. He professed, however, the warmest regard for Marlborough, and stood firm by him in the struggle for Harley's dismissal. In one of his letters he said, "I own it is hard at first to choose one's friendships well; but when they are once fixed upon a merit like the person you mention, [Marlborough,] and their worth experienced by a long conversation, it is past my comprehension how that should ever be lessened or shaken, especially by the cunning insinuations of one [Mrs Masham] who, every step she advances towards it,¹ must discover the basest ingrati-

¹ Duke of Shrewsbury to Vernon, Aug. 1706. Coxe, v. 212.

tude imaginable to a benefactor, who has made her what she is."

It was in the most secret manner that Harley and the Duke of Buckingham made their advances to this important nobleman. They first urged him to concur with them in forming a ministry on a broad basis—that is, of the moderate men of both parties, to the exclusion of the Whig junto, which had lorded it equally over the Queen, Godolphin, and Marlborough. These efforts, however, were at the time unsuccessful; but in the year 1709 Shrewsbury lent a more willing ear to Harley's insinuations, in consequence of several circumstances which had produced a coldness between him and the Whig leaders. He had been refused Godolphin's interest to procure for him a pension from the Queen; and he had also been refused the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, which had been bestowed on Lord Wharton. But the most unpardonable affront of all was the coldness shown by the Duchess of Marlborough, and other Whig ladies, to his lady, an Italian by birth, who, after having been his mistress, was privately married to him at Rome. Harley, aware of these circumstances, redoubled his assiduities to the fascinating Duke, and prevailed on the Queen to offer to put at his disposal some elevated situation, and to flatter his Duchess with delicate attentions—which formed a striking contrast to the studied coldness of the Whig ladies of rank.¹

These prudent steps on the part of Harley were not lost on Shrewsbury, whom we find, so early as July 1709, busily intriguing underhand with that astute courtier.*

* "At home, politicians are busier than ever, especially Mr Harley, who omits no art or industry to strengthen his party, or to spread all the malicious insinuations imaginable against you and me. If one would believe Lord

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53.

Progress of
the secret
intrigue
with
Shrews-
bury, 1709.

¹ Conduct,
239-242.
Cunning-
ham, ii. 217.
Coxe, v.
212, 213.

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1710.

54.

Shrewsbury
openly joins
the Tories,
March 1710.

Shrewsbury however, in outward form, was still in the full confidence of Marlborough; and he continued to solicit and obtain numerous favours from him for his friends and adherents. He did not take a decided part against the Whigs till Sacheverell's trial, on which occasion he exerted himself to obtain a verdict of acquittal. Marlborough's absence on the Continent, Godolphin's accidental visit to Newmarket, and the prorogation of Parliament, which took place on 5th April, at length gave the Queen an opportunity of rewarding this conduct; and accordingly she sent her chamberlain, the Marquis of Kent, on the 13th, with orders to deliver his staff of office to the Duke of Shrewsbury, promising the Marquis, at the same time, a dukedom in return for his ready compliance with her wishes. On the same evening she announced the appointment as a matter of course to Godolphin, who had not the slightest idea that such a thing was in contemplation, upon whom it fell like a flash of lightning.¹*

¹ Conduct,
242. Old-
mixon, 447.
Coxe, v.
215, 216.

55.
Godolphin's
temporising
conduct on
hearing of
the appoint-
ment.

Had Godolphin been a man of greater decision and resolution of character, he would, on learning of this appointment, which so clearly betrayed a secret influence behind the throne, more powerful than that of the ministry, have instantly resigned, and allowed the real advisers of the Queen to become her responsible servants. But he was deterred by the consideration that such a step would, as a necessary consequence, draw after it

Rivers, who is very deep in all the measures and designs of the Tories, Mr Harley and Lord Rivers seem to take it for granted that the Duke of Shrewsbury is very fast engaged with them; for certain, he has been lately with the Queen."—*Godolphin to Marlborough*, July 29, 1709; COXE, v. 213.

* "Since you went to Newmarket, I have received several assurances from the Duke of Shrewsbury of his readiness to serve me upon all occasions, and his willingness to come into my service; which offer I was very willing to

peace with France and the entire abandonment of all the objects of the war, and in all probability pave the way for the restoration of the Stuart line, and the utter ruin of all those who had taken an active part in bringing about the Revolution. Influenced by these pressing considerations, which the evident change in the temper of the nation, as evinced in Sacheverell's trial, rendered more important, he resolved to steer a middle course, and, without at once resigning, to remonstrate in the strongest manner against the appointment, and to point out the ruinous effect which such a public and decided proof of the transference of her confidence to another party would have upon her allies abroad, the issue of the negotiations pending with France, and the probability of success in the attempts of that power to impose the Pretender upon this country. After alluding to the cabals of Shrewsbury with Harley and the Tories, and remonstrating against his appointment, he added, "What consequence can this possibly have, but to make every man that is now in your cabinet council, *except the Duke of Somerset*, to run from it as they would from the plague? and I leave it to your Majesty to judge what effect this entire change of your ministers will have among your allies abroad, and how well this war is like to be carried on, in their opinions, by those who have all along opposed and obstructed it, and who will like any peace the better,¹ the more it

accept of, having a very good opinion of him, and believing he may be of great use in these troublesome times. For these reasons I have resolved to part with the Duke of Kent, who, as I hope, will be easy in this matter by being made a duke. And I hope that this change will meet with your approbation, which I wish I may have in all my actions. I have not yet declared my intentions of giving the staff and key to the Duke of Shrewsbury, because I would be the first to acquaint you with it."—*Queen Anne to Godolphin*, April 13, 1709; *OLDMIXON*, 447.

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1710.

¹ Godolphin to Queen Anne, April 16, 1710. *Conduct*, 247. Coxe, v. 217.

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VIII.

1710.

56.
Marlboro-
rough's
views on
hearing of
the appoint-
ment, May
5.

leaves France at liberty to take their time of imposing the Pretender on this country."

Godolphin, however, did not carry his threat into execution ; the Whigs did not run away in a body from the cabinet, and he himself gave the first example of remaining in it. He even succeeded in convincing his more impetuous colleague, Sunderland, of the propriety of remaining quiet, and neither resigning nor dissolving Parliament in the present temper of the nation. In this opinion Lord Somers concurred, deeming it better, in the mean time, to dissemble, in hopes that the storm would blow over.* Marlborough received the unwelcome and unexpected intelligence in a more worthy spirit, and, without concealing the important consequences of the step, resolved only to confine himself to the faithful discharge of his public duties. "I confess to you that I am very much surprised at the courage of the Duke of Shrewsbury to come so freely into a storm : I think you and I may see very plainly, by neither the Queen nor his ever taking notice of it to us, that they have another scheme than what would be approved of by us. However, I cannot hinder wishing that the Queen may prosper ; but I think it is impossible for her to have any quiet or ease in the hands I think she is running into. If we have a battle, it must be the last ; for it will be in all likelihood in a plain where there is neither tree nor hedge.¹ I hope God will bless me with another opportunity of giving a mark of my zeal for the Queen and my country, and then I shall be the less

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, May 5, 1710. Coxe, v. 225.

* "I have seen Lord Somers and Lord Sunderland to-day ; both appear to be as much mortified as myself, but thinking it reasonable enough to dissemble. I believe the good news from Lord Marlborough contributes something to that."—*Godolphin to Duchess of Marlborough*, v. 219.

concerned at the behaviour I have received of late." The really great are never on a crisis unworthy of themselves. Marlborough was determined to be avenged on his enemies ; but his was the vengeance of a noble mind.

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1710.

Marlborough, however, soon had convincing proof that the faithful and patriotic discharge of his duty as commander-in-chief would save him from none of the vexations consequent on the loss of his influence at court. Even in the promotion of officers in his own army, and of whose merit or claims to advancement he alone was cognisant, he was made to feel that he was fettered. After his brilliant exploit of forcing the French lines in the outset of the campaign, he laid before the Queen a list of officers for promotion on account of their conduct on the occasion ; and in this last he confined the list of brigadiers to a single name before that of Colonel Hill, and of colonels to three names before that of Mr Masham. When this list was laid before the Queen, she immediately started an objection to the list not reaching down to those in which it was known she was most interested. On this being reported to the commander-in-chief, he at once included Mr Masham in the list of colonels, with which concession the Queen professed herself to be highly gratified. The real difficulty, however, remained in the promotion of Colonel Hill, as he was the person concerning whose advancement so serious a difficulty had formerly occurred, and concerning whom both parties were therefore desirous of trying their strength. The Queen insisted on three more commissions, including that of Colonel Hill, being made out—adding that unless this was done she would sign none. In vain Mr Walpole, who acted for Mr Cardonell as

57.
Renewed
contest re-
garding Col.
Hill's pro-
motion.

CHAP.
VIII.

1710.

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, May 15-19, 1710. *Coxe*, v. 232-240.

58.
The Queen resolves to dismiss Lord Sunderland.

secretary at war, represented that the advancement of such young officers would seriously embarrass Marlborough; as possibly there might be twenty German and Dutch colonels in their regiments who would not serve under them, and whose loss might be an irreparable injury to the Allied army. This consideration, as is ever the case with those founded on reason when the passions are inflamed, had no sort of influence on the Queen; and Marlborough, finding that he could not rely on the support of the Whigs in his resistance, was obliged to yield. Colonel Hill, in consequence, without any other claim than court favour, was made a general over the head of various meritorious and senior officers.¹

Encouraged by their success in this trial of strength, Harley and Mrs Masham resolved to venture on the more important step of getting quit of an important member of the cabinet. The person selected as the object of their attack was Lord Sunderland, because he was one of the secretaries of state, and therefore had constant access to the Queen's person—because he was son-in-law to the Duke of Marlborough—and because he had been on a former occasion forced on the Queen by a united effort of the whole Whig party, much against her inclination. In this attempt they found a warm supporter in the Duke of Somerset, who was openly verifying the prediction of Godolphin, as to his having in secret joined Harley's party;* and in a more covert way by the Duke of Shrewsbury, who showed his

* Our affairs here are a little more quiet at present, *because the Duke of Somerset is out of town*; and indeed I know no other reason for it. I am every day more and more confirmed in my opinion that, as the Duke of Somerset is the cause of everything against Lady Marlborough and you, so the Duke of Shrewsbury's regard for you, and the fear of justly *chequering* you, has been the only reason that has hindered the affair of Lord Sunderland being brought to a conclusion."—*Godolphin to Marlborough*, May 29, 1710; *Coxe*, v. 243.

gratitude to his royal mistress for his recent promotion by aiding in a project which he knew she had so much at heart. The knowledge of what was going forward, and the now undisguised manifestation of the wishes of the sovereign, spread such an alarm in the cabinet, that, in Godolphin's words, "Lord Halifax, Lord-President, and generally the rest of the Whigs, are so uneasy that they are ready to make their court to Mr Harley, who appears ready to receive it, and is making advances and professions almost to every one that he thinks our friends." ¹

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¹ Godolphin to Marlborough, May 29, 1710. Coxe, v. 245.

At the earnest solicitation of Godolphin and his remaining friends in the cabinet, Marlborough addressed the Duke of Shrewsbury at this crisis ; and his letter is valuable as containing a clear exposition of his views and motives of action at this critical period, and of the close connection which unhappily prevailed between these court intrigues and the great civil, political, and religious questions which divided the world. "The constant friendship there has always been between us encourages me to unburden myself to you at this juncture, when every post brings fresh alarms of the removal of my Lord Sunderland. 'Tis not his relationship to me, and the kindness I have for him, that concerns me, so much as *the effect it may have on the Queen's service and the public*; for as such a step will generally be thought to be aimed at, and of course reflect on me, it will in a great measure render me incapable of being useful to Her Majesty's affairs either at home or abroad. This is what I have solely at heart, and shall ever be unalterable in my zeal for it. I own to you, were it not at this critical juncture, when, with the blessing of God, we have so fair a prospect of putting a happy end to

^{59.} Marlborough in vain applies to the Duke of Shrewsbury, June 19.

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1710.

this long and expensive war, which I think nothing but our own unfortunate divisions at home can prevent, I should be much less concerned ; for I am persuaded the insolence of the French, under their languishing circumstances, is chiefly owing to the advantage they hope to reap from them. There is another thing I find makes a great noise in Holland, and that is the report of a new Parliament, which I am confident would be such a damp to the Dutch as our enemies would not fail to reap great advantages from. I must therefore entreat you to reflect seriously on the present situation of our affairs both at home and abroad, and that you will give your helping hand to prevent the mischiefs that are threatening us. I expect, particularly from your friendship to me, that you will be a support to Lord Sunderland ; and, from your zeal for the Queen's service and the public, that you will use your endeavours that the Parliament may die its natural death." ¹

¹ Marlborough to Shrewsbury, June 19, 1710. Coxe, v. 249, 250.

60.
The Queen persists in her resolution, and Sunderland is dismissed and Lord Dartmouth appointed.

The Duke of Marlborough was a man, and therefore was not without the usual weaknesses of all, even the greatest sons of Adam. It is probable, therefore, that family attachment and personal ambition were not without their influence with him on this occasion. But every impartial mind must admit that the public considerations here stated were also of the greatest weight, and that the whole interests engaged in the war were at stake in the decision of the present question. But it was all in vain. Harley and Mrs Masham were determined on Sunderland's dismissal, and dismissed he was accordingly. Harley had found it no difficult matter to disunite the Whigs, who, seeing their cabinet drifting on the breakers, were making all haste to leap into the first boat which promised to take them out of danger. Somers alone was

firm ; but, after being long closeted with the Queen, who expressed " her resolution as being unalterable and long taken," he withdrew without the slightest hope of being able to save Sunderland. Shrewsbury, instead of being influenced by Marlborough's appeal, expressed his surprise only that the Duke should take the matter so much to heart ; and the Queen, on hearing his letter read, evinced the same indifference. " It is true, indeed," said she, " that the turning out a son-in-law of his may be a mortification to the Duke of Marlborough ; but must the fate of Europe depend on that ? and must he be gratified in all his desires, and I not in so reasonable a thing as parting with a man whom I took into my service with all the uneasiness imaginable ; whose behaviour to me has been so ever since ; and who, I must add, is, I believe, obnoxious to all people, except a few ? I think the Duke of Marlborough's pressing so earnestly that I should delay my intentions is using me very hardly ; and I hope that both he and you will not wonder that I do not comply with his desires." Sunderland, accordingly, was dismissed, and Lord Dartmouth appointed in his room that very night, although Godolphin warned the Queen that such a step would probably lead to his own and Marlborough's resignation.¹

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VIII.

1710.

¹The Queen to Godolphin, June 13, 1710. Coxe, v. 260-263.

The result of this decided step shows how correctly Harley had calculated on the fears and disunion of the Whigs rendering nugatory any resistance on their part. A meeting of the cabinet was held, at which a resolution was signed by all present,* embracing the whole administration

61.
Effect of this step on the Whig cabinet and on Marlborough.

* Viz., Lord-Chancellor Cowper, Lord-Treasurer Godolphin, Lord-President Somers ; Lord Privy Seal, Duke of Newcastle ; Duke of Devonshire, Lord High Steward ; Lord Orford, First Lord of the Admiralty ; Lord Halifax, Auditor of the Exchequer ; and Mr Secretary Boyle.—COXE, v. 269.

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1710.

except the Dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury, drawn up in the most earnest terms, in which they exhorted the Duke to forego his resentment, and to retain his command for the welfare of his country and Europe—concluding that they looked upon his continuance at the head of the army as a step essential to prevent the dissolution of Parliament, which could not fail to give the greatest satisfaction to his enemies. Marlborough reluctantly acquiesced in their representations, though he felt so much mortified that his continuance in the command was, as he himself said, nothing but a penance for his sins. “As this,” said he, “is like to be my last campaign, I hope He will bless us with some further success, and that things may be made easier for those who shall succeed me; for, as it is, my head is perpetually hot. This, joined with the disagreeable things I receive from England, makes me every minute wish to be a hermit. Yesterday being thanksgiving day, I was in devotion, and earnestly hope God will forgive what is past, and strengthen our hearts; so that, for the time to come, we may bear with patience the ingratitude we have met with, which He no doubt, in due time, will punish; for we, I fear, have too justly merited His anger, but noways have deserved this usage of the Queen. We must look upon this correction as a favour, if it atones for our past actions. As I would not be a favourite were I in power, my daily prayers shall be, that you and I might be so strengthened by His grace that the remainder of our lives might be spent in doing good, by which we might at last be acceptable to Him.”¹

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin and the Duchess, June 29 and July 7, 1710. Coxe, v. 266-268. Conduct, 251, 252.

Marlborough, at this juncture, though absent with the army in Flanders, was too clear-sighted not to perceive how the current of public opinion was running in

England, and of the danger of the national policy being entirely altered, and the whole fruits of his victories lost, if a dissolution were to take place in the present excited state of the public mind. His opinion on this subject was often and very earnestly expressed :—" I think," said he, " the importance of preserving this Parliament is of so much consequence to the Queen and nation, that I would omit nothing that could be in my power ; for I am as sure as I can be of anything in this world, that, if this Parliament be broke, the Queen's glory and interest is lost both in Holland and the Empire, the fatal consequences of which you can best judge ; so that, let me, as a faithful friend, beg of you that, if you can help this fatal step, you will do it ; if not, that you will give demonstrations of its being done contrary to your advice ; so that, when they return to their wits, the true authors may meet with their reward !"¹

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62.
Marlbo-
rough's
anxiety lest
Parliament
should be
dissolved.

¹ Marlbo-
rough to
Godolphin,
July 5,
1710. Coxe,
v. 272.
Mem. of Sir
R. Walpole,
ii. 31.

The event soon showed how correctly Marlborough had divined the consequences of these changes in the cabinet, both in England and on the Continent. By the Tories, the dismissal of Sunderland was naturally hailed as the signal of victory. They accordingly exerted themselves in procuring addresses from the cities and counties in favour of the new policy, and with such effect that they flowed in in a perfect torrent. The Whigs could muster only a very few, and these extremely feeble in comparison. In these addresses, the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance were openly advanced, and the most determined resolution to support the Queen and the Church against all republican, traitorous, and schismatic opponents. The Jacobites about the palace congratulated the Queen on being at length rescued from the domineering party which had so long

63.
Conse-
quences
of these
changes in
administra-
tion in
England.

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1710.

oppressed her and the nation. "Your Majesty," said the Duke of Beaufort, "is now Queen indeed." To such a length did the ferment spread, that the moneyed men in the city took the alarm: the funds were rapidly depressed; and credit was so violently shaken that a deputation from the Bank of England, headed by the governor, waited on the Queen to represent the dangerous effect on public credit which would ensue if any further changes were made in the cabinet. Her Majesty said in answer to the address: "I have for some time resolved to remove the Earl of Sunderland for certain reasons of state. I have no *present* intention to make any further changes; but should I alter any of my ministers, it shall be no prejudice to the Bank or the common cause." This answer, though sufficiently vague, was regarded as a pledge that the foreign policy of the nation should not be altered, and allayed the apprehension in the city of London.¹

¹ Cox, v.
277-279.

64.
Effect on
the Conti-
nent, and
the Empe-
ror's letter
to Marl-
borough.

It was not, however, so easy a matter to allay the apprehensions entertained in Holland and Germany as to the consequences to be apprehended from the changes in the English cabinet, and so decisive a step as the dismissal of the Duke of Marlborough's son-in-law. Such was the alarm spread in Holland, and at Vienna, that the Queen was under the necessity of directing Lord Townsend to represent to the States that the step which had excited so much alarm was not intended to lessen the credit of the Duke of Marlborough, and that it was also Her Majesty's intention not to make any further changes, and to prosecute the war with the same vigour as before. A similar assurance was transmitted by the Lord Chamberlain to the Emperor. But these assurances were far from neutralising the effect produced on the

Continent by the decisive *act* which had taken place ; and the States in consequence presented a solemn remonstrance through their minister, M. Vryberg, against any further changes in the ministry, or dissolution of Parliament. And the Emperor's apprehensions were so far from being allayed, and his dread that Marlborough would resign the command of the army was such, that he addressed to him a most flattering letter, in which he earnestly besought him not to abandon a post which he had filled with so much glory, and to disappoint his enemies by continuing to exert himself for the common cause and the general liberty of Europe.¹ *

CHAP.
VIII.
1710.

¹ Conduct,
255-257.
Coxe, v.
281-283.

Marlborough's anxiety about the dismissal of Lord Sunderland was much aggravated by its renewing those female jars and reproaches between the Duchess and Queen Anne, which, as he had foretold, only made matters worse.† Although, since the last fatal interview,

65.
Renewed
altercation
between the
Duchess
and the
Queen.

* "I am grieved at this change in the ministry having commenced with the dismissal of Lord Sunderland, as he has in every stage of the war proved himself an able, skilful, and faithful minister of the Queen and the common cause. Although I learn that this blow has, in consequence of his affinity to you, deeply affected your mind, I cannot be induced to credit a report that your Highness is meditating to resign your military command, and to retire from court. What could happen more fatal to the public welfare, and more pernicious to the Allies? What counsel could your Highness adopt more detrimental to yourself, than, in the midst of your triumphs, and almost at the conclusion of the war, to desert the common cause—to throw away the merit of your former services—to excite the anger of the Queen—to give scope to the vengeance of your enemies? Can your affectionate heart even for a moment indulge the thought of such terrible calamities both to the public weal and your welfare, by which the whole fruits of the war, acquired with such labour and glory, would be exposed to the utmost peril ; and the almost desperate cause of the enemy, to the eternal reproach of your name, would resume new strength, not to be overcome by future exertion?"—*Emperor Joseph to Marlborough*, July 16, 1710 ; COXE, v. 282-283.

† "It has always been my observation in disputes, especially in those of kindness and friendship, that all reproaches, though ever so just, serve to no end but to make the breach wider."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, Jan. 1710 ; *Conduct*, 244.

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1710.

all personal intercourse between these two illustrious personages had ceased, yet the violence of the Duchess's temper would not permit her to abstain from every species of communication, as her husband had so strongly recommended. When the dismissal of Lord Sunderland was in agitation, she took advantage of the transmission of an official letter from the Duke to the Lord-Treasurer to send a private, but very acrimonious remonstrance, from herself to the Queen. She there recapitulated with historic truth, but injudicious warmth, her husband's great services both to Her Majesty and the country; expatiated on the former intimacy which had subsisted between them—in proof of which she enclosed some of the Queen's early letters to herself; and concluded by ascribing the melancholy change which had taken place to the influence of Mrs Masham and the Duke of Somerset. She enclosed also a letter from Somerset to herself in former days, in which the Queen was treated with very little respect, but which she requested to get back, “as, for nonsense, ingratitude, and *good spelling*, she considered it as worthy of preservation as a great curiosity, and as being the production of so eminent a politician.”¹

¹ Conduct, 254. Coxe, v. 287, 288. Duchess of Marlborough to Queen Anne, June 7, 1710.

66.
Queen Anne's answer to the Duchess, June 12.

It was not to be expected that so intemperate and ill-judged an effusion should produce any other effect but the widening, if possible, a breach which had already become too large for closing. The Queen returned no answer till the 12th, the very day before Sunderland's dismissal, when she wrote a short note concluding with the words—“But I shall trouble you with a very short answer, looking upon it to be a continuation of the ill usage I have so often met with, which shows me very plainly what I am to expect for the future. I do not

return the letters, knowing they can be of no use to you, but must desire all my strange scrawls may be sent back to me, it being impossible they can now be agreeable to you." The Duchess wrote in reply that it was "her duty to make every exertion to prevent the extremities to which her Majesty was driving the Duke of Marlborough, at the very moment when he was hourly venturing his life in her service. She held out an indirect threat of the dreadful account which the new favourite might be required to render for her advice to ruin a man who had won six pitched battles and ten sieges; observed that the Queen's refusal to return her letters would make her take better care of the rest; and concluded with these words: "My concern for Lord Marlborough's honour and reputation in the world, and the great trouble he expresses on this occasion, brings me to beg of your Majesty on my knees, that you would only defer this thing till there is peace, or an end of the campaign; and after such an expression your Majesty can have no doubt of my ever entering into anything that can displease you." To this letter the Queen returned no answer; the next day Sunderland was dismissed, and all correspondence between them thereafter ceased.¹

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Though secure of cordial support from the throne in his attempt to dispossess the Whigs, Harley was yet sagacious enough to see that it was necessary to proceed cautiously, and that a precipitate step might prove fatal to the design. A union in the cabinet, joined to the great name and influence of the Duke of Marlborough, had more than once already caused a similar effort to miscarry. Impressed with these ideas, he proceeded step by step; and his first care was to sow disunion

¹ Conduct,
254. Queen
Anne to
Duchess of
Marlbo-
rough, June
12, 1710.
Coxe, v.
281-290.

67.
Artful mea-
sures of
Harley to
divide the
Whigs.

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among the Whig noblemen, from whom the most strenuous opposition might be anticipated. This was no difficult matter, now that the real inclinations of the sovereign had by a decisive act been made known ; it is surprising how readily courtiers find pretences for veering round to the known wishes of the sovereign. The address of Shrewsbury, the influence of Somerset, were successfully employed by this arch-diplomatist to produce dissension among their former friends. Orford was expecting the garter, which he hoped to obtain from the influence of the Duke of Shrewsbury. " Wharton," as Maynwaring said, " had been long nibbling with Mrs Masham ;" the Duke of Newcastle was on the most friendly terms with her and Harley, and hoped to retain his situation as Lord Privy Seal through their influence. Halifax was the first who threw off the mask ; he was won by his appointment as one of the joint plenipotentiaries at the Hague, in opposition to the strenuous advice of Marlborough.* Even Somers, who was the most conscientious of the Whig leaders, and had long been a firm friend of Marlborough, began to waver in his fidelity, and listened respectfully to the representations of the Queen that the influence of the Marlborough family had become too great, and that it was desirable to form a government in which he himself and the leading Whigs might form a part, but from which the connections of the great family might be excluded. In

* "By the account Mr Craggs gives me of England, I think everything that is bad may be expected. Lord Halifax being employed in the manner he is seems to me very extraordinary, for I cannot comprehend how it should be agreeable either to the Whigs or Tories, or that he himself at this juncture should care to be thus employed ; but so many extraordinary things happen every day that I wonder at nothing."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, July 24, 1710 ; COXE, v. 298.

truth, their influence was already at an end, as was evinced soon after in two subordinate but still very important appointments. The first of these was the removal of Lord Coningsby from the office of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, for no other reason but his devotion to Marlborough, who was succeeded by the Earl of Anglesea, a decided Tory; and the refusal to nominate, on the Duke's application, Lord Raby as one of the Commissioners of the Board of Trade. "I suppose," said the Duke on hearing of the refusal, "that the place is designed for some particular favourite that is to be provided for."¹

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¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, July 14, 1710. Cox, v. 301-303. Cunningham, ii. 305.

A still more serious because more public blight was put on Marlborough, at this period, by a very singular and mysterious step, involving, it was evident, political results of the very highest importance. Mr Cresset was appointed by the Queen on a secret mission to Hanover, the object of which was concealed both from Godolphin and Marlborough. He died a few hours before his departure; but before his death he saw his papers sealed up, and ordered them to be *delivered to Mr Harley*. The Lord-Treasurer observed "that Mr Harley betrayed great marks of confusion when he heard of this, and was not relieved till the papers were in his possession." It was known both to Godolphin and Marlborough that the object of this mission was to offer the command of the army in Flanders to the Elector of Hanover, in order to get quit of the influence which it gave to the latter of these statesmen. This was revealed to Marlborough by the Elector himself, who, in a frequent and confidential correspondence, expressed his determination not to accept the command, evinced the most perfect reliance on the good faith of the

68.
Secret mission of Mr Cresset to Hanover, who dies, and Marlborough's magnanimity on hearing of it.

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Duke, expressed his lively concern for the stroke levelled at him in the dismissal of his son-in-law, and earnestly deprecated any further changes in the ministry or dissolution of Parliament. Marlborough received the intelligence in a noble spirit. In a letter to Godolphin he observed, "I know, by the commission Mr Cresset was charged with, what you and I were to expect. When I see you, you have the particulars, and how I came to be informed of this business. When I tell you the whole, I think you will be of opinion that it is impossible they should trust the Queen with their whole design, for it is directly tying her hand and foot. I beg you will never mention that to anybody ; for though I think I shall have the glory of saving the Queen, she must know nothing of it. I am very sensible of the hard usage I have met with ; but my own honour and my love for my country must not suffer me to take anything ill of the Queen, but attribute my cruel usage to the malice of my enemies. Our extravagant behaviour in England has so encouraged the French that they take measures as if the war were but just beginning ; so that our new ministers will be extremely deceived, for, the greater desire they shall express for peace, the less they will have it in their power to obtain it. For our enemies live by no other hopes but that the Allies will not have the same confidence which has hitherto been, but quarrel amongst themselves ; which I pray God may not happen, and then everything must go well,—I mean abroad."¹

¹ Marlborough to Godolphin, Aug. 16, 1710. Coxe, v. 304, 305.

The Duke, however, was well aware that his tenure of power now hung by a thread, and could not, by any possibility, be prolonged beyond a few months. His great anxiety, therefore, was extreme, during the brief

period that his tenure of power was allotted to him, to do nothing unworthy of his character, or that might compromise his great reputation. Of this he had no fears, for his words and his actions were in his own keeping. But a more difficult task awaited him in moderating the transports and restraining the impetuosity of the Duchess, whose affection for her husband was deeply wounded by the treatment which he had undergone ; while her ambition was not less mortified by the total extinction of her influence at court, where she still held a prominent and responsible situation. He was indefatigable, therefore, in his efforts, unhappily attended with little success, to keep her within the bounds of temper and moderation. "It is impossible," said he, "to be more sensible than I am of the outrages I meet with ; but since everybody thinks I must have patience, *I must suffer for three or four months.* I beg you to believe that I know the Duke of Shrewsbury so well that it shall not be in his power to impose upon me. I was in hopes you had taken your resolution of staying in the country till my return, and of *never being prevailed upon to write again to the Queen*, which I beg you will continue firm to ; for, as things are, you must expect neither reason nor justice, but, on the contrary, all the brutality imaginable. I am prepared for the worst. I shall consult my honour and my best friends as to my behaviour, so that I may have nothing to reproach myself ; and for your behaviour, I beg you will make not one step but as my opinion may go along with you : for it is not enough, in an ungrateful age, to have reason on our side, but, as things are, we must be seen to act with prudence and temper : so that again I beg of you to trust nobody but me, who love you, and will

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69.

Noble conduct of Marlborough, and his wise advice to the Duchess at this crisis.

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¹ Marlborough to the Duchess, July 17 and 31, 1710. Coxe, v. 309, 310.

be tenderly kind to you as long as I have life. Your honour and reputation are safe with me ; therefore, do not be provoked to say or do anything that may give our enemy an advantage. It is most certain, the Queen has been prevailed upon to use both you and me barbarously ; but nothing should be said disrespectfully ; for she would not act so if she were not influenced by others who follow their own interest more than hers.”¹

70.
Harley and Mrs Masham resolve on Godolphin's dismissal, August 8.

The anticipations of the hero, as to an entire change of men and measures, were realised even sooner than he expected. Godolphin and he were under the impression that no material change would be made till after a new Parliament had been assembled, and that even then the Queen's new advisers would not venture on so strong a step as dismissing the first of these statesmen, whose private integrity and financial ability were alike unquestionable, and who had steered the state vessel with such success through the dangers of the preceding years. But in that they were mistaken : Harley and the secret council had resolved on Godolphin's dismissal *before* Parliament was dissolved. The first symptom of this resolution which manifested itself was on the 7th August, when the Premier, at a cabinet council, forgetting his usual caution, let fall some expressions as to Shrewsbury's admission to power being signalled by the adoption of French counsels. The Queen evinced no open displeasure at the moment, although she treasured the words in her heart ; and in a subsequent audience of two hours, which he had on the same day with the Queen, and in which he mentioned a plot to poison her Majesty, which had been disclosed to Marlborough by a princess at the French court, he was well received.² Still, when the

* Conduct, 258-261. Godolphin to Marlborough, Aug. 7, 1710 ; and Queen Anne to Godolphin, August 7, 1710. Coxe, v. 318-321.

necessary measures for carrying on the war were proposed, the minister always found, as he himself expressed it, "*there is a lion in the way.*" In effect, the Queen's resolution was taken. On the next morning, a servant in the royal livery left a note from the Queen at his door, desiring him to break his staff of office, to avoid its re-delivery; and by the same post the Queen announced the step to the Duke of Marlborough.*

The fallen minister addressed a noble letter to Marlborough on this occasion, in which he conjured him to suppress all private feelings of resentment, and remain at his post at the head of the army, as long as it was possible, so as to prevent the Alliance from falling to pieces, and the whole objects of the war, when within their grasp, being lost.† This conduct on the part of the dismissed minister was the more disinterested that such had been his integrity, during the many years he had

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71.
Patriotic
conduct of
Godolphin
and Marl-
borough on
this occa-
sion.

* "KENSINGTON, August 7.

"The uneasiness which you have showed for some time has given me very much trouble, though I have borne it; and had your behaviour continued the same it was for a few years after my coming to the crown, I could have no dispute with myself what to do. But the many unkind returns I have received since, especially what you said to me personally before the Lords, makes it impossible for me to continue you any longer in my service; but I will give you a pension of £4000 a-year; and I desire that, instead of bringing the staff to me, you will break it, which, I believe, will be easier to us both."—*Queen Anne to Godolphin*, August 8, 1710; COXE, v. 322.

† "August 9.—Though my circumstances at present are a little discouraging, yet nothing can ever make me neglect doing what is best for the whole, or thinking of everything that may be most for your honour and safety. I do therefore now, and resolve to continue, to take the same pains, and care I did before, that you may be effectually supported to the end of this campaign in the post where you are; in hopes this may enable you better to persuade the States and the Emperor not to break quite loose from the Queen and England, but to expect, as patiently as they can, the opening of the session, or a new Parliament. I continue still very much of the opinion that either of them will be entirely for supporting the Alliance; consequently, will be wholly guided by you as soon as you return to England. I fancy other methods than this should be taken—the

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been at the head of the Treasury, that he was almost destitute of private fortune when he left it, and, before an accession of fortune from his brother, was not possessed of more than £1000 a-year. He declined, however, to demand the promised pension, which was never paid. Marlborough, on his part, on receiving the decisive intelligence, was equally governed by public and patriotic feelings. Being well aware that it was the secret councils of France which had suggested the step, and that it was preparatory to a restoration of the Pretender, his principal care was directed to resume his confidential intercourse with the Elector of Hanover, to preserve the integrity of the Grand Alliance, to prosecute his military operations with the usual vigour, and to keep up the spirit of his friends in England. But though resolute to discharge his public duty to the very last, he was not the less aware, in secret, that his means of effectually serving his country were at an end; that he could no longer reckon on the support of Government at home; that he stood alone, amidst the wreck of all his compeers, the mark of envy, hatred, and malice; and that the change in the British government extinguished all hope of peace being concluded with France on such terms as,¹

¹ Conduct, 261. Marlborough's Private Corres. i. 360-361. Coxe, v. 322-366.

Grand Alliance must be dissolved, and England fall into immediate distraction and confusion.

"This, then, I lay down as the most probable method to save the whole from destruction, with most honour and advantage to yourself. I hope, therefore, you will govern yourself accordingly; and I pray God to continue the same success to you that you have hitherto had.

"Whatever you shall find necessary to represent to the Queen, relating either to the subsistence of the troops, or to anything else which you wish may be furnished from hence for your project, you may continue to write to me, and I will put as much of it as is proper into the hands of Mr Secretary Boyle to show to the Queen; or you may write directly to him, if that be easier to you, for his part has been very good to you and me, and I have reason to think will continue so."—Coxe, v. 323-325.

despite the extraordinary success of the war, would attain the objects for which it had been undertaken.*

The dismissal of Godolphin fell like a thunderbolt on the Whigs, and revealed the weakness which, by his secret manœuvres, Harley had implanted amongst them. A meeting was held on the same evening at Mr Secretary Boyle's, at which it was resolved to keep aloof, and not embarrass the new Government: a fatal determination—the excuse of cowardice—which has more than once since that time paralysed a party capable of directing with success and advantage the councils of their country. Perceiving the weakness and disunion of their adversaries, Harley and the Tories were not slow in following up their success. The Treasury was immediately put in commission, at the head of which was Lord Poulett, a decided Tory. Lord Rialton, Godolphin's son, was dismissed from his office of Cofferer of the Household, and the whole real powers of Government were vested in Harley, who next day was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. The other Whig leaders, who had been tampered with by Harley, at first retained their situations, hoping to be taken in and form part of the new administration; but ere long they perceived their error

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1710.

72.

Consternation of the Whigs, and new ministry, Aug. 20.

* "The surprising news in your last of the Treasury being put in commission has filled me with very melancholy thoughts. I wish I may be mistaken, and that there may be credit found for the support of the army, otherwise France will, without a battle, get the better of the Allies. Whatever happens, whilst I have life I shall be faithfully yours. I have taken my resolution of troubling my head as little as possible with politics, but apply my thoughts wholly how to finish this campaign to the best advantage, and then I shall be impatient of being with you. It is impossible to express the very uneasy and extravagant thoughts I have had since the news of your being out. The French will certainly be so heartened by our unaccountable proceedings in England, that, whatever their difficulties may be, they will not think of a peace while they have hopes of our running into confusion."—*Marlborough to Godolphin*, Aug. 28/30, 1710; COXE, v. 328.

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in standing at all, and attempting to form an interest independent of Marlborough and Godolphin, and they at length resigned in a body. On the 19th, Somers, the Duke of Devonshire, and Mr Boyle resigned, and were succeeded by the Earl of Rochester, the Duke of Buckingham, and Mr St John. Wharton resigned the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, and was succeeded by the Duke of Ormond. Lord Orford resigned the Presidency of the Admiralty, and was succeeded by Sir John Leake. Lord-Chancellor Cowper also resigned, notwithstanding the earnest request of the Queen that he would remain in office, and the Great Seal was put in commission. The Duke of Newcastle alone remained in office, unfaithful to his friends.¹

¹ Coxe, v.
326-339.

73.
Decision of
Marlbo-
rough on
this crisis.

It was a matter of the utmost moment to the new administration to secure the continuance of Marlborough at the head of the army, both from the weight which his great name and services gave to any government, and the influence which it might have on the negotiations for peace depending with France. His own decided inclination, with a view to his personal comfort, was to resign with the rest ; but he put himself entirely in the hands of his friends at home ; and it was their unanimous opinion that he should retain his command, as affording the only security for a good peace or the Protestant succession to the throne. This decision, which was entirely in conformity with that which they had formerly come to when Lord Sunderland was dismissed,* was commu-

* " MY LORD,—Nous ne nous serions pas décidés à vous écrire, si nous ne jugions par votre lettre, dont Lord-Trésorier nous a fait part, combien votre Excellence doit être affectée de la situation de My Lord Sunderland. Cette lettre, quelque touchante, quelque bien motivée qu'elle fût, n'a pas empêché la reine de lui ôter les sceaux ce matin. Il fallait que la résolution en fût bien prise, puisque les moyens extraordinaires mis en usage pour la prévenir,

nicated to the Duke in an official letter from that nobleman, who said : " I congratulate you on the taking of Bethune, and hope in God the conclusion of the campaign will be attended with your usual success ; though it is a grievous thing to think of the usage you have met with at the same time that you are doing what you are abroad with success. This proceeding is certainly without example ; and you may depend upon it that the Whigs to a man have a right sense of it, and upon all occasions will act as you may think right. If you, Lord Godolphin, and they, act cordially and vigorously together, everything must come right again, especially since the Elector of Hanover is so right as he is, as appears both from what you know and the letters I have seen from him myself. For that affair of Hanover, it must be our sheet-anchor ; and if it be rightly managed, you will be effectually avenged of all your enemies ; and that by securing your country—the only sure way :¹ and you will be, if possible, a greater man than you have ever

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¹ Lord Sunderland to Marlborough, Aug. 24, 1710. Coxe, v. 335.

puisque toutes les représentations employées pour en démontrer les conséquences, tant au dehors qu'au dedans, ont été inutiles. C'est un malheur dont nous sommes profondément affligés : nous sentons jusqu'à quel point votre Excellence doit y être sensible, dans cette conjuncture critique, où vous exposez à chaque instant votre personne pour votre pays, et où les destinées de l'Europe dépendent si éminemment de votre conduite et de vos succès ; mais nous sommes également convaincus que votre Excellence ne sauroit aujourd'hui quitter le commandement sans compromettre les intérêts de la Grande Alliance. Ainsi, au nom de la gloire qui vous environne, et que vous avez méritée par de si nombreux services, au nom de l'Europe entière, qui fonde en vous ses espérances, au nom de tous ceux qui vous sont chers dans votre patrie, dont le salut dépend de vos nouveaux efforts, nous vous conjurons d'achever votre ouvrage, et de rester à la tête de l'armée ; c'est, à votre avis, la mesure la plus propre à faire renoncer au projet de dissoudre le parlement. Votre Excellence, en se rendant à nos prières, nous obligera, ainsi que tous ceux qui ont à cœur le bien public. Elle doit être aussi persuadée qu'en prenant le parti contraire, elle causerait à ses ennemis la plus douce des jouissances."—*Hist. de Marlborough*, p. 260-261.

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74.
Sachever-
ell's tri-
umphant
progress
through the
country.

been yet ; and you and your friends, Lord Godolphin and the Whigs, must carry their point. This is the unanimous opinion of Lord Somers, Lord Halifax, Lord Orford, and the Duke of Devonshire, and of all their friends ; and there is nothing they will not do for the common interest, and for supporting you yourself ; and this they have given me commission to assure you of."

While these events were in progress, the most extraordinary demonstration ever witnessed was made, how entirely they coincided with the feelings of the great majority in point of numbers in the nation. Sacheverell was the puppet put up on this occasion : he was the object of general idolatry. His zeal in the great cause of passive obedience and non-resistance having been rewarded by the Queen with the presentation to a valuable living in Wales, he made a public progress through the country, which resembled rather the march of a triumphant conqueror, or a beloved sovereign, than that of any private individual, how great soever. Multitudes everywhere came forth to hail his progress : the nobility, clergy, and public, vied in demonstrations of joy and exultation : cavalcades escorted him from town to town, and from village to village ; and this was done, not by the inconstant populace merely, but by high sheriffs, bishops, and dignitaries and magistrates of every description. At some miles from Oxford, he was met by Lord Abingdon at the head of five hundred horsemen, who escorted him into the town. Similar demonstrations took place at Bridgewater, which he entered attended by ten thousand persons, of whom four thousand were on horseback.¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
vi. 907.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
252, 253.
Coxe, v.
345, 346.

Encouraged by these unmistakable demonstrations of public opinion, Harley ventured on the decisive step of a

dissolution. Parliament was dissolved by royal proclamation, on the 28th September, and the event showed that he had not miscalculated the public feeling. The influence of the mob in all the chief towns was strongly exerted in favour of the side which the popular idol, Dr Sacheverell had espoused. The clergy were particularly zealous in his cause : for once the ferment of popular feeling, and the efforts of interested subservience, ran in the same direction. United, they formed a torrent which was for the time irresistible. The Whigs had generally calculated on retaining their majority in Parliament, but they were miserably disappointed. Harley and the Tories obtained a clear majority : there were few Whigs returned against whom petitions were not presented : on the first meeting of Parliament, Mr Bromley, a staunch Tory, was elected speaker ; and it soon appeared, from the divisions, that the new ministry had a majority of a third of the house.¹

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75.

Parliament
is dissolved,
and the
Tories get
a decided
majority.

¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 914-938.

Although Marlborough retained his command with the entire concurrence of the new ministers, yet he had no real power ; and even his military operations were subjected to an examination and surveillance which he had never before experienced. Still more was he made to feel his altered situation in the vexations to which at home he was exposed. The envy of which he was the object appeared in the difficulties which were now started, by the new Lords of the Treasury, in regard to the prosecution of the works at Blenheim. This noble monument of a nation's gratitude had hitherto proceeded rapidly ; the stately design of Vanbrugh was approaching its completion ; and so anxious had the Queen at first been to see it finished that she got a model of it placed in the royal palace of Kensington.

76.
Paltry dif-
ficulties
thrown in
the way of
the comple-
tion of
Blenheim.

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Now, however, petty and unworthy objections were started, on the score of expense ; and attempts were made, by delaying payment of the sums from the Treasury, to throw the cost of completing the building on the great general. He had penetration enough, however, to avoid falling into the snare, and actually suspended the progress of the work when the Treasury warrants were withheld. He constantly directed that the management of the building should be left to the Queen's officers ; and, by steadily adhering to this system, he shamed them into continuing the work.¹

¹ Marlborough to the Duchess, Oct. 25 and Nov. 25, 1710. Cox, v. 351, 352.

77.
Attempts to
gain over
Marlborough
to
the Tories.

Marlborough's name and influence, however, were too great to be entirely neglected, and the party which was now rising into supremacy at court were anxious, if possible, to secure them for their own side. They made, accordingly, secret overtures to him ; and it was even insinuated that, if he would abandon the Whigs, and coalesce with them, he would entirely regain the royal favour, and might aspire to the highest situation which a subject could hold. Lord Bolingbroke has told us what the conditions of this alliance were to be :—" He was to abandon the Whigs, his new friends, and take up with the Tories, his old friends ; to engage heartily in the true interests, and no longer leave his country a prey to rapine and faction. He was, besides, required to restrain the rage and fury of his wife. Their offers were coupled with threats of an impeachment, and boasts that sufficient evidence could be adduced to carry a prosecution through both Houses." To terms so degrading, the Duke answered in a manner worthy of his high reputation. He declared his resolution to be of no party, to vote according to his conscience, and to be as hearty as his new colleagues in support of the Queen's

government and the welfare of the country. This manly reply increased the repulsive feelings with which he was regarded by the ministry, who seem now to have finally resolved on his ruin; while the intelligence that such overtures had been made having got wind, sowed distrust between him and the Whig leaders, which was never afterwards entirely removed. But he honourably declared that he would be governed by the Whigs, whom he would never desert; and that they could not suspect the purity of his motives in so doing, as they had now lost their majority in the House of Commons.^{1*}

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1710.

¹ Boling-
broke's Cor-
resp. i. 41.
Mr Sec. St
John to Mr
Drummond,
Dec. 20,
1710. Coxe,
v. 352.

Parliament met on the 25th November; and Marlborough, in the end of the year, returned to London. He was received with loud acclamations by the populace, and conducted with the wonted cheers to his residence in town at Montagu House. But his triumph was of short duration. He soon received decisive proof of the altered temper of Government towards him. The majority in the House of Commons was now against him, as it had for some time been in the country. The last election had turned the scale in favour of the Tories. In the Queen's speech, no notice was taken of the late successes in Flanders, no vote of thanks for his services in the campaign was moved by Ministers; and they even contrived, by a side-wind, to get quit of one proposed, to their no small embarrassment, by Lord Scarborough. The Duchess, too, was threatened with

78.
Ungrateful
reception of
Marlbo-
rough by
the minis-
ters and the
country.

* "I beg you to lose no time in sending me, to the Hague, the opinion of our friend mentioned in my letter; for I would be governed by the Whigs, from whose principle and interest I will never depart. Whilst they had a majority in the House of Commons, they might suspect it might be my interest; but now they must do me the justice to see that it is my inclination and principle which makes me act."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, Nov. 9, 1710; COXE, v. 360.

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1710.

removal from her situation at court ; and Marlborough avowed that he knew the Queen was "as desirous for her removal as Mr Harley and Mrs Masham can be." The violent temper and proud unbending spirit of the Duchess were ill calculated to heal such a breach, which in the course of the winter became so wide that her removal from the situation she held, as Mistress of the Robes, was only prevented by the fear that, in the vehemence of her resentment, she might publish the Queen's correspondence, and that the Duke, whose military services could not yet be spared, might resign his command. Libels against both the Duke and the Duchess daily appeared, and passed entirely unpunished, though the freedom of the press was far from being established. Three officers were dismissed from the army for drinking his health. When he waited on the Queen, on his arrival in England, in the end of December, she said—"I must request you will not suffer any vote of thanks to you to be moved in Parliament this year, *as my ministers will certainly oppose it.*" Such was the return made by Government to the hero who had raised the power and glory of England to an unprecedented pitch, and who in that very campaign had cut deeper into the iron frontier of France than had ever been done in any former one.¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 935-938.
Coxe, v.
404-407.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.

79.
Dismissal of
the Duchess
of Marlbo-
rough.

The female coterie which aided at St James's the male opponents of Marlborough, was naturally extremely solicitous to get the Duchess removed from her situations as head of the Queen's household and Keeper of the Privy Purse ; and Ministers were only prevented from carrying their wishes into effect by their apprehension of the Duke's resigning his command of the army if these wishes were executed. In an audience,

on 17th January 1711, Marlborough presented a letter to her Majesty from the Duchess, couched in terms of extreme humility, in which she declared that his anxiety was such, at the requital his services had received, that she apprehended he would not live six months.* The Queen at first refused to read it ; and when at length, at the Duke's earnest request, she agreed to do so, she coldly observed, — "I cannot change my resolution." Marlborough, in the most moving terms, and with touching eloquence, entreated her Majesty not to dismiss the Duchess till she had no more need of his services, by the war being finished, which, he hoped, would be in less than a year ; but he received no other answer but a peremptory demand for the surrender of the gold key, the symbol of her office, within three days. Unable to obtain any relaxation in his sovereign's resolution, Marlborough withdrew with the deepest emotions of indignation and sorrow. The Duchess, in a worthy spirit, immediately took her resolution : she sent in her resignation, with the gold key, that very night. So deeply was Marlborough hurt at this extraordinary ingratitude for all his services, that he at first resolved to resign the whole of his commands, and retire altogether into private life.¹

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From this intention he was only diverted, and that with great difficulty, by the efforts of Godolphin and the Whigs at home, and Prince Eugene and the Pensionary Heinsius abroad, who earnestly besought him

* "Though I never thought of troubling your Majesty again in this manner, yet the circumstances I see my Lord Marlborough in, and the apprehension I have that he cannot live six months, if there is not some end put to his sufferings on my account, make it impossible for me to resist doing everything in my power to ease him."—*Duchess of Marlborough to Queen Anne*, 17th Jan. 1711 ; COXE, v. 410.

¹ COXE, v. 410, 412, 415. Conduct, 262, 263.

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80.

Marlbo-
rough with
great reluc-
tance with-
holds his
intended
resignation.

not to abandon the command, as that would at once dissolve the Grand Alliance, and ruin the common cause. We can sympathise with the feelings of a victorious warrior who felt reluctant to forego, by one hasty step, the fruit of nine years of victories: we cannot but respect the self-sacrifice of the patriot who preferred enduring mortifications himself, to endangering the great cause of religious freedom and European independence. Influenced by these considerations, Marlborough withheld his intended resignation. The Duchess of Somerset was made Mistress of the Robes, and Mrs Masham obtained the confidential situation of Keeper of the Privy Purse. Malignity, now sure of impunity, heaped up invectives on the falling hero. His integrity was calumniated, his courage even was questioned, and the most consummate general of that, or perhaps any other age, was represented as the lowest of mankind. It soon appeared how unfounded the aspersions cast upon the Duchess, as well as the Duke, had been. Her accounts, after having undergone the most rigid scrutiny, were returned without any objection being stated against them; and the Queen put an end to all such calumnies, by saying, — "*Everybody* knows cheating is not the Duchess of Marlborough's crime." In former days, in pressing a kindness upon her, she had said, "Make no more words about it; and either own or conceal it, as you like best, since I think the richest crown could never repay the services I have received from you."¹

¹ Conduct,
261, 262.
Coxe, v.
415, 416.
Smollett, c.
x. § 20.

81.

Causes of
the fall of
the Whig
adminis-
tration.

From the preceding detail of the causes which led to the fall of the great Whig administration, of which Godolphin and Marlborough were the heads, and which had wrought such wonders for the deliverance of Europe, it must be evident that, without exculpating Queen Anne

from the charges of inconsistency and favouritism, which the unanimous judgment of subsequent times has attached to her, and admitting fully the grossness of her ingratitude to the great hero who had made her reign illustrious, much also was to be ascribed to the overweening ambition and grasping disposition of that party itself. It was their insatiable thirst for power, their resolution to fill up every office under Government with their own adherents, their determination to allow the sovereign no voice even in the selection of persons for her own household appointments, which proved their ruin. It was this which made them force Sunderland upon her, and resist the appointment of Colonel Hill, and strive so strenuously to oust Mrs Masham, and labour with such vehemence to exclude Shrewsbury. It was their exorbitant power, which so long enabled them to carry on this system with impunity, which drove the Queen into bedchamber plots and secret councils, just as an oppressive and vigorous government drives the disaffected into secret conspiracies. And beyond all doubt, it was a secret consciousness of their revolt against their sovereign, even when provoked by unbearable oppression, which caused them to adopt this ungracious and exclusive policy ; for, like Ishmael, they felt that the hand of every man who was not with them was against them. A memorable proof, among the many which history affords, of the application of the rules of morality and honour to public as well as private life, and the impossibility of violating either without inducing condign punishment even in this world.

The career of the Duke of Marlborough as a statesman terminated at this period. Thereafter he had no power in the Cabinet ; he was never consulted in diplomacy ; as a general, even, he was fettered and restrained

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82.

Great
achievements of
Marlborough
rough down
to this time.

in planning or carrying into execution military operations. This, therefore, is a convenient period for casting the eyes back on what he had done during the ten years that he had been the real head of the Alliance ; and marvellous beyond all example is the retrospect ! He began the war on the Waal and the Meuse, with the French standards waving in sight of the Dutch frontier, and the government of the Hague trembling for the fate of their frontier fortress, Nimeguen. He had now brought the Allied ensigns to the Scarpe, conquered Flanders, subdued all its fortresses, and nearly worked through the iron frontier of France itself. Nothing was wanting but the subjugation of its *last* fortress, Arras, to enable the Allies to march to Paris, and dictate a glorious peace in the halls of Versailles. He had defeated the French in four pitched battles and as many combats ; he had taken every town to which he had laid siege ; he had held together, when often about to separate, the discordant elements of the Grand Alliance. By his daring march to Bavaria, and victory of Blenheim, he had delivered Germany when in the utmost danger ; by the succours he sent to Eugene, he had conquered Italy at Turin ; by his prudent dispositions he had saved Spain, after the battle of Almanza. He had broken the power of Louis XIV. when at the zenith of his fame ; he had been only prevented by faction at home from completing his overthrow by the capture of his capital. He had never suffered a reverse ; he had never alienated a friend ; he had conquered by his mildness many enemies. Such deeds require no comment ; they are without a parallel in European history, and justly place Marlborough in the place assigned him by Napoleon—at the head of European captains.

CHAPTER IX.

CAMPAIGN IN SPAIN IN THE YEAR 1710.—DEATH OF THE EMPEROR JOSEPH AND ACCESSION OF CHARLES TO THE EMPIRE.—CAMPAIGN OF 1711.—MARLBOROUGH PASSES VILLARS' LINES.—SIEGE AND FALL OF BOUCHAIN.—FRESH DISASTERS IN SPAIN.—SECRET NEGOTIATION OF THE ENGLISH MINISTRY WITH LOUIS.—TREATY OF UTRECHT.—MARLBOROUGH'S CONDEMNATION OF IT, AND DISMISSAL FROM THE COMMAND.—HIS UNJUST AND INVIDIOUS PERSECUTION.—DISASTERS IN FLANDERS, AND TREATY OF RASTADT.—MARLBOROUGH LEAVES ENGLAND FOR THE CONTINENT.

So uniform had been the triumphs, so unbroken the success of Marlborough, that if he had continued in power, and not been interrupted in his undertakings, future ages would never have been able to form an adequate idea, either of the greatness of his capacity, or the decisive influence which it had exercised on the fate of the war. His victories would have been ascribed to accident, the valour of the soldiers under his command, the weakness of his enemies, or the want of skill in the generals who directed their armies. It might even have been said, that it was to his illustrious partner in glory that he owed his successes, and that Eugene was the real hero of the war. But that which no achievements on his part, how great soever, could have done, was effectually accomplished by the malice of his enemies. He is indebted to them for the decisive demonstration of his greatness, the establishment of his glory on an imper-

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1.
Proof which
Marlbo-
rough's fall
afforded of
his great-
ness.

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ishable foundation. Nine successive campaigns directed by him had presented an unbroken career of success, and the next would beyond all question have put the keystone in the arch of his fame, by a glorious peace which attained all the objects of the war. At that critical moment he was overturned by the efforts of faction, aided by a palace intrigue at home—and what was the result? There appeared at once what had been owing to the greatness of one man. Instantly, as if by enchantment, the fabric of victory raised by such effort was dissolved. Spain was lost, Flanders reconquered, Germany threatened. The arch of the Grand Alliance, when no longer upheld by his mighty arm, fell to pieces : like the roof of the Dom-Daniel beneath the roots of the sea, when the image, whose supporting arm upheld it, was pierced to the heart by the son of Hodeirah, the “ocean vault fell in, and all were crushed.”

2.
Commence-
ment of the
campaign of
1710 in
Spain, and
defeat of
Philip,
July 21.

Spain was the quarter in which the disastrous effect of the termination of his counsels first appeared. Great efforts had been made on both sides, and on each sanguine hopes were entertained of success. Two armies were assembled in spring, in Portugal and Catalonia—the former under the command of the Marquis of Villa Verde, the latter of Marshal Stahremberg and General Stanhope. The design was that these forces should combine their movements, and, converging together, meet and place Charles on the throne of Madrid. The main strength of the Allies was in Catalonia, where they had assembled thirty thousand men, chiefly German and English veterans. The first important operations took place on the side of Catalonia, where the two rival kings were at the head of their respective armies, and events took place

not unworthy of the presence of monarchs contending for the crown of Spain. The first serious engagement took place near Alfarez, where Philip was defeated with the loss of fifteen hundred men, and driven into Lerida. The Spanish troops upon this check retreated towards Saragossa, in the hope of anticipating the Allies in the passage of the Ebro. They there made a stand ; but the valour of the Allied troops, and the ability of Stanhope, gave them a complete victory. Philip was totally defeated with the loss of ten thousand men ; most of the new levies threw away their arms and dispersed ; and he himself fled to Soria attended only by eight thousand men, the poor remains of nineteen thousand with which he had combated on the Ebro ; and Charles a few days after made his triumphant entry into Saragossa, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, to whom he restored all their ancient privileges.¹

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¹ St Philip.
ii. 348.
Hist. of
Europe,
591-597.
Somerville's
Queen
Anne, 638.
Coxe's
House of
Bourbon,
i. 303.

This important victory a second time opened to Charles the road to Madrid. No resistance was experienced on his march from Saragossa to the capital ; and on the 28th September he made his public entrance into it, at the head of two thousand horse. But it soon appeared how adverse the inhabitants had become to the Austrian rule, and how deep the enthusiasm which had been excited by the intrepid and patriotic conduct of the Bourbon sovereign. An ominous silence reigned in the streets as his triumphant cavalcade passed through them ; no sound but the clang of the horses' hoofs on the pavement was heard ; the greater part of the inhabitants, excepting those whom age, poverty, or infirmity had compelled to remain at home, had followed Philip in his retreat towards Valladolid.² Chagrin and vexation overwhelmed the disappointed monarch ; and, refusing to

3.
Entry of
Charles into
Madrid, and
his cold reception
there, Sept.
28.

² Coxe's
House of
Bourbon, i.
305. St
Philippe,
ii. 385.

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proceed on to the palace of the Retiro, as was the usual custom, he retired hastily through the gate of Alcala, saying—"Madrid is a desert."

4.
Efforts of
Philip, and
precarious
situation of
Charles at
Madrid.

Philip retired to Valladolid with only nine thousand men ; but he daily received reinforcements from France, and the Castilian nobles made the most energetic efforts to restore his fallen fortunes. The whole reliance of Louis was on the divisions in England, and the prospect of Marlborough being overthrown ; and he accordingly, on hearing of the defeat of Saragossa, wrote in order to ascertain if the resources of Spain were sufficient to prolong the contest, adding, "that he hoped, by prosecuting the war another campaign in Flanders and Germany, for the occurrence of some *favourable opportunity to divide or weaken the Allies.*" In truth he was merely fighting to gain time, till Godolphin and Marlborough were overthrown, and Tory councils became predominant in the cabinet of London. The fall of Godolphin in the beginning of August realised these hopes, and encouraged him to make the most vigorous efforts for the prosecution of the war in Spain. Reinforcements were sent by post from all parts of France, Vendôme was appointed to the command ; and such was the energy displayed, that, when he arrived at Philip's camp, near Valladolid, he found himself at the head of twenty-five thousand men.¹

¹ Mém. de
Noailles, iv.
352-373.
Coxe's
House of
Bourbon,
i. 307.
Coxe's
Marlb. v.
379-381.

5.
Arrival of
Noailles at
Valladolid,
and great
efforts of
the Span-
iards.

Meanwhile Noailles arrived at the camp and court of the fugitive prince, and there a most moving scene took place. In a solemn assembly of the nobles he dwelt on the vast efforts which France had made on behalf of Spain, and represented the absolute necessity of their making the greatest efforts to avert the Austrian yoke, and prevent their country from becoming a mere province of another monarchy. The appeal was not made

in vain. Philip in this extremity displayed a spirit worthy of his race. He declared his resolution to live or die King of Spain, rejected all offers of a partition or compromise, and loudly expressed his determination, rather than succumb, to bury himself under the ruins of the monarchy. Animated by this example, the nobles declared their willingness to stand by their sovereign in any emergency that might occur. The spirit of enthusiasm, kindled in the court and camp, spread rapidly from town to town, and from village to village. Every rank and class of the people vied with each other in devotion to their monarch; and the sacrifices they made for their country, and the hardy recruits pouring in on all sides, at once refilled the ranks, and restored the spirit of the army.¹

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¹ Noailles,
iv. 137-151.
Coxe's
House of
Bourbon, i.
308, 309.
Marlb. v.
331.

While this noble spirit was displayed by the Castilians on behalf of Philip, the support of whom they had come to identify with the preservation of the national independence, very different was the scene which the rival camp of Charles presented. The condition of his affairs is well depicted in a letter from General Stanhope to Lord Dartmouth, the Secretary of State, on 4th October: "We have despatched several messengers to our friends on the Portuguese frontier, pressing them to join us, since they have no enemy left on their frontier; and on the success of these instances, which we have repeated to them, will depend the fate of the campaign. They have in a condition to march thirty battalions of foot, and above three thousand horse. If they will join us we shall have another battle, which, in all probability, will be decisive. If they do not, we shall have some difficulty in making a retreat to Aragon; for the Duke of Anjou will have above double our number of horse, and be equal at least

6.
Divisions,
and irreso-
lution on
the part of
Charles, at
Madrid.

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¹ Gen. Stan-
hope to
Lord Dart-
mouth, Oct.
4, 1710.
Coxe, v.
378, 379.

to us in foot. The country is our enemy, and we are not masters in Castile of more ground than we encamp upon. It will certainly be a surprise to your lordship to learn that, since the battle, not one officer in the Duke of Anjou's service has left him; and that the greater part of the grandees, and all the civil and ministerial officers that reside at Madrid, have followed him, inso-much that, at our first arrival here, the town appeared a desert."¹

7.
The Portu-
guese go-
vernment
refuses to
allow their
troops to
succour
Charles VI.

In vain the confederate generals represented, in the most urgent manner, to the Portuguese government, that, unless they advanced to the support of Charles VI., he would be obliged to evacuate Madrid, and Spain would be lost. The military commanders of their army concurred in the necessity, and Dos Minas offered instantly to set out for Madrid with three thousand foot and one thousand horse. The cabinet of Lisbon, however, led by the Duke of Cadaval, who was secretly in the French interest, refused to allow the troops to march, on the ground that the subsidies promised by the British government had not been paid. Then was seen the fatal influence which the change of ministry in England had already exercised on the fate of the war. Harley and St John, who had been now two months at the head of affairs in London, were in no hurry to execute the finance engagements of their predecessors; the promised subsidies were not paid; the Portuguese reinforcements did not march; and Spain was lost.²

² Mr Lefeb-
vre to Mr
Sec. St
John, Oct.
13, 1710.
Coxe, v.
380.

While disunion and imbecility were thus paralysing all the operations of the Allies, and depriving them of the whole fruits of victory, the French government were anxiously and vigorously preparing to take advantage of the extraordinary gleam of good fortune which the

change of policy in the British cabinet had opened upon them. The expedition of Cette having been frustrated by the vigilance of Noailles, and the want of support of the troops on the Italian side of the Alps, the French forces, thus set at liberty in Languedoc, joined by strong reinforcements from Berwick's army, were poured into Catalonia. He invested Gerona, the key of that province on the north, with twenty thousand men, and extended their detachments so as to form a communication with the army of Philip at Valladolid. The situation of Charles at Madrid was now extremely hazardous ; for while Vendôme's army, twenty-five thousand strong, and which was hourly receiving accessions of force from the two Castiles, threatened him on the north, the province of Catalonia, hitherto his stronghold, was endangered by the French invasion. Influenced by these accumulating dangers, he took the resolution of evacuating the capital, and on the 11th November set out from Madrid, accompanied by two thousand horse, and arrived in safety at Barcelona on the 15th of December.¹

Meanwhile having, by incredible exertions, succeeded in six weeks in forming an army of twenty-five thousand men, Philip took the most active steps to improve these favourable circumstances. His first care was to take post at the bridge of Almarez, on the Tagus—a strategical point of great importance, as commanding the communication between Upper and Lower Estremadura, the scene of Lord Hill's brilliant exploit in after times. The Portuguese took advantage of this circumstance to excuse themselves from any co-operation with the Allies at Madrid, who, being abandoned to their own resources, and deserted by their sovereign, had no alternative but to retreat towards Catalonia ; and, with this view,

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8.

Vigorous measures of the French, and retreat of Charles from Madrid, November 11.

¹ St Philip. ii. 400, 401. Coxe's House of Bourbon, i. 314, 315. Coxe's Marl. v. 381, 382.

9.

Advance of Philip towards Madrid and Almarez.

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they retired in three columns through the mountainous region which separates Old Castile from the adjoining province of Valencia. But Vendôme was too able and active a general to allow them to make their retreat without molestation. He pursued them with all his forces; and being greatly superior to the enemy in cavalry, in consequence of the detachment of so large a part of that arm as an escort to the king towards Barcelona, and the non-arrival of any succour from the side of Portugal, he soon obtained decisive advantages. The Allies were dreadfully harassed also in their retreat by the peasantry, who, as in every national war from the days of Sertorius to those of Wellington, formed themselves into guerilla bands, which assailed the flanks and rear of the retiring columns without intermission. Thus assailed and exhausted, the third column, composed of six thousand British troops under Stanhope in person, arrived, on the evening of the 6th December, at Brihuerga, where they sought a few hours' rest within its ruined walls.¹

¹ St Philip. ii. 401, 402. Coxe, v. 383. Coxe's House of Bourbon, i. 315-317.

10.
Attack on Stanhope's division at Brihuerga, which is forced to capitulate.

A dreadful disaster here awaited this division of the British troops, which in its ultimate effects proved decisive of the fate of the war in the Peninsula. The Allies retreated not only in three columns, but with *a day's march between each*—the British, as those on whom most reliance could be placed, being the last one. Upon this state of matters Vendôme formed, and with great ability executed, a plan for cutting off entirely this detached rearguard. Carefully concealing his movements from the enemy, which the favourable disposition of the peasantry gave him every means of doing, he, unknown to them, followed closely the British column; and no sooner had they taken post at Brihuerga, than he appeared on the heights which environ it with twenty thousand

men, and not only entirely surrounded the town, but cut off all communication between it and the other Allied divisions in advance. So completely was Stanhope taken by surprise that there were no guards put on the look-out, to give notice of the approach of an enemy; and so active were the movements of Vendôme that with twenty thousand men he had marched forty-five leagues in eight days, being on an average of five leagues and a half, or fourteen miles a-day—an astonishing effort in a mountainous country, and over very bad roads. The result was what might have been expected from such remissness on the one side and such energy on the other. Stanhope was assailed on all sides by a force triple his own; and after defending himself bravely for two days he was forced to surrender with all his troops, now reduced by sickness and the sword to four thousand five hundred men!¹

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¹ St Philip.
ii. 402-409.
Gen. Pippes
to Marlbo-
rough,
March 29,
1711.
Coxe's
House of
Bourbon,
i. 317-319.
Coxe's
Marlb. v.
383, 384.
Gen. Stan-
hope to
Lord Dart-
mouth, Dec.
17, 1710.

This was a mortal blow to the Allied cause in the Peninsula. Stahremberg, who received on the second day only intelligence of the danger of his lieutenant, made all imaginable haste back with the German and Dutch troops; but he arrived on the heights near Brihuerga only to find the whole French and Spanish army, now twenty-two thousand strong, drawn up in battle array, on strong ground between him and that town, while the melancholy silence which prevailed within its walls told but too clearly the sad fate of his companions in arms. Nothing remained but to make the best of his way with his army, now diminished by a full third of its numbers, towards Barcelona. But Vendôme was not a general to halt midway in the career of success. Stahremberg retreated leisurely, taking up, wherever he halted, as strong a position

11.
Battle of
Villa Vici-
osa, in
which Ven-
dôme is re-
pulsed, and
subsequent
disasters of
the Allies,
Dec. 8.

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as possible, to impose upon the enemy, and afford time for his artillery and baggage to defile in the rear. With this view he took up a strong position at VILLA VICIOSA, where he offered battle, hoping that he would be able to keep his ground till nightfall, when he might resume his retreat. Vendôme, however, having all his forces in hand, immediately commenced a vigorous assault upon the Allies. The latter fought with great resolution, being old German troops, and not only succeeded in maintaining their ground, but even in repulsing the enemy at all points—a result which clearly proved what might have been expected if the disaster at Brihuerga had not deprived them of a third, and that the best part, of their troops.

12.
Great disasters in the
retreat.

But being inferior, by fully ten thousand men, to the enemy, and still more so in horse, Stahremberg did not deem it advisable to await a renewed attack on the following day from an enemy now double his numbers, and flushed with success. He therefore spiked all his artillery on the field of battle, as there was no possibility of drawing them off through the execrable roads by which alone his retreat could be conducted, and continued to retire, on the following day, by roads scarcely passable for a victorious army, encumbered with artillery. But, as usual in Spain, the effects of this forced retreat equalled the losses of the most disastrous battle. Stahremberg reached Barcelona on the 6th January with only seven thousand men, without guns, and in the most deplorable condition—the poor remains of twenty-five thousand, which set out from thence in the beginning of summer, to achieve the conquest of the Peninsula.¹ The immediate consequence of these disasters was the loss of all the Austrian conquests in Spain, whose

¹ St Philip.
ii. 405-407.
Coxe, v.
383-385.
House of
Bourbon,
i. 317-319.

possessions, by the end of February, were limited to the fortresses of Barcelona, Tarragona, and Balaguer.

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1711.

13.

Effects of these disasters on Marlborough, who lands in Holland, March 4, 1711.

These calamities, which seemed to extinguish all hope of a successful issue of a war in the Peninsula, at least for a very long period, at once demonstrated how entirely the success of the war had come to depend on the single arm, and be chained to the standards, of Marlborough, and proved to him that it was only by a vigorous effort in the Netherlands, where the Allies were superior, and the defences of France were so nearly broken through, that the objects of the war could be attained. He left England, accordingly, deeply impressed with the necessity of making the most of the brief period allotted to him, from the change of ministry, to bring the war to a successful conclusion. He landed at the Hague on the 4th March; and, although no longer possessing the confidence of Government, or intrusted with any control over diplomatic measures, he immediately set himself with the utmost vigour to prepare for military operations. Great efforts had been made by both parties, during the winter, for the resumption of hostilities, on even a more extended scale than in any preceding campaign. Marlborough found the army in the Low Countries extremely efficient and powerful; diversions were promised on the side both of Spain and Piedmont; and a treaty had been concluded with the Spanish government, in consequence of which a large part of the Imperial forces was rendered disposable, and Prince Eugene was preparing to lead them into the Low Countries. But, in the midst of these flattering prospects, an event occurred which suddenly deranged them all, postponed for above a month the opening of the campaign, and, in its final result, changed the fate of Europe.¹

¹ Hist. de Marl. iii. 285. Coxe, vi. 4-10.

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1711.

14.

Death of
the Empe-
ror Joseph,
and election
of Charles
VI. as Em-
peror, April
16.

On the 16th April the Emperor Joseph died of small-pox at Vienna—an event which was immediately followed by Charles, King of Spain, declaring himself a candidate for the Imperial throne. As his pretensions required to be supported by a powerful demonstration of troops, the march of a large part of Eugene's men to the Netherlands was immediately stopped; and that prince himself was hastily recalled from Mentz, to take the command at Ratisbon, as marshal of the forces of the Empire. Charles was soon after elected Emperor. Thus Marlborough was left to commence the campaign alone, which was the more to be regretted, as the preparations of Louis, during the winter, for the defence of his dominions, had been made on the most extensive scale, and Marshal Villars' lines had come to be regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of field fortification. Yet were Marlborough's forces most formidable; for, when reviewed at Orchies on the 30th April, between Lille and Douai, they were found, including Eugene's troops, which had come up, to amount to one hundred and eighty-four battalions, and three hundred and sixty-four squadrons, mustering above one hundred thousand combatants. But forty-one battalions and forty squadrons were in garrison, which reduced the effective force in the field to eighty thousand men.¹

¹ Eugene to Marlborough, April 23, 1711. Marlborough to St John, April 29, 1711. Coxe, vi. 16; and Des. v. 319.

15.
Great lines
constructed
by Villars.

The great object of Louis and his generals had been to construct such a line of defences as might prevent the irruption of the enemy into the French territory, now that the interior and last line of fortresses was so nearly broken through. In pursuance of this design, Villars had, with the aid of all the most experienced engineers in France, and at a vast expense of labour

and money, constructed during the winter a series of lines and field-works, exceeding anything yet seen in modern Europe in magnitude and strength, and to which the still more famous works of Torres Vedras have alone, in subsequent times, afforded a parallel. The fortifications extended from Namur on the Meuse, by a sort of irregular line, to the coast of Picardy. Running first along the marshy line of the Canche, they rested on the forts of Montreuil, Hesdin, and Trevant; while the great fortresses of Ypres, Calais, Gravelines, and St Omer, lying in their front, and still in the hands of the French, rendered any attempt to approach them both difficult and dangerous. From the Canche, the lines ran across the plain, by Montenencourt, to the Gy rivulet, down its banks to its junction with the Scarpe, along the Scarpe to Biache, from thence by a canal to the Sanzet, along the Sanzet to its junction with the Scheldt, down the latter stream to Valenciennes, and from thence by a series of intrenchments to the Sambre. Along the whole of this immense line, extending over so great a variety of ground, for above forty miles, every effort had been made, by joining the resources of art to the defences of nature, to render the position impregnable. The lines were not continuous, as in many places the ground was so rugged, or the obstacles of rocks, precipices, and ravines were so formidable, that it was evidently impossible to overcome them. But wherever a passage was practicable, the approaches to it were protected in the most imposing manner. If a streamlet ran along the line, it was carefully dammed up, so as to become impassable. Every morass was deepened, by stopping up its drains, or letting in the water of the larger rivers by artificial canals; redoubts

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were placed on the heights, so as to enfilade the plains between them ; while in the open country, where no advantage of ground was to be met with, field-works were erected, armed with abundance of heavy cannon. To man these formidable lines, Villars had under his command one hundred and fifty-six battalions, and two hundred and twenty-seven squadrons in the field, numbering seventy thousand infantry, and twenty thousand horse. He had ninety field-guns and twelve howitzers. There were, besides, thirty-five battalions and eighty squadrons detached or in the forts ; and, as Eugene soon took away twelve battalions and fifty squadrons from the Allied army, the forces on the opposite sides, when they came to blows, were very nearly equal.¹

¹ Ledyard, ii. 426.
Coxe, vi. 21, 22.
Hist. de Marl. iii. 286, 287.

16.
Plan of the campaign.

Marlborough took the field on the 1st May, with eighty thousand men ; and his whole force was soon grouped in and around Douai. The headquarters of Villars were at Cambray ; but, seeing the forces of his adversary thus accumulated at one point, he made a corresponding concentration, and arranged his whole disposable forces between Bouchain on the right, and Monchy Le Preux on the left. The position of the French marshal, which extended in a concave semicircle, with the fortresses covering either flank, he considered, and with reason, as beyond the reach of attack. Several skirmishes took place between the two armies with various success. Two hundred men were lost to the confederates in an attack on Arleux. Villars took a convoy between Mortagne and St Amand, and killed and wounded four hundred more. Marlborough had his revenge in several attacks on detached points along the line, among which was the redoubt of Aubigny. But this desultory warfare

did not suit the views of either commanders. The English general was meditating a great enterprise, which should at once deprive the enemy of all his defences, and reduce him to the necessity of fighting a decisive battle, or losing his last frontier fortresses. But he was overwhelmed with gloomy anticipations; he felt his strength sinking under his incessant and protracted fatigues, and knew well he was serving a party who, envious of his fame, were ever ready to decry his achievements. He lay, accordingly, for three weeks, waiting for his illustrious colleague, Prince Eugene, who arrived on the 23d May, in time to engage in a great celebration of the anniversary of the victory at Ramilies, which had taken place on that day.¹ *

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¹ Coxe, vi.
28. Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
289, 290.
Rousset, ii.
289-291.

The close vicinity of the two armies led to a sort of tacit armistice between them, which induced an occasional occurrence of a melancholy and interesting kind. The Pretender was with the army of Villars; and his tall, graceful figure, the skill with which he managed his horse, and the elegance of his manners, rendered him an object of equal interest to the troops of both nations. Several of the English noblemen approached the hostile videttes when he was in sight, to get a nearer view of the heir of their royal house: the French sentries, in courtesy, and sympathising with the feeling, allowed them to remain near. Villars had more in view than mere courtesy in thus showing the royal prince of St Ger-

17.
Appearance
of the Pre-
tender in
the French
army.

* "I see my Lord Rochester has gone where we all must follow. I believe my journey will be hastened by the many vexations I meet with. I am sure I wish well to my country, and if I could do good, I should think no pains too great; but I find myself decay so very fast, that from my heart and soul I wish the Queen and my country a peace, by which I might have the advantage of enjoying a little quiet, which is my greatest ambition."—*Marlbrough to the Duchess*, 25th May 1711; COXE, vi. 28.

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¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
286-287.

18.
Fatal separation of
Eugene with his
troops from Marlborough,
June 18.

² Marlborough to Sec.
St John,
June 14,
1711. Des.
v. 428.
Coxe, vi.
29, 30.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
292, 293.

mains to his lost subjects; he was not ignorant of the secret negotiation which the new ministry were commencing with Louis XIV., and hoped to awaken an interest in his favour in the hearts of the English officers. "The following day," says Marshal Villars, "my Lord Marlborough sent to request me no longer to hazard these promenades. In effect, I had no intentions of repeating them, but I thought it might be serviceable to the young prince to let himself be known."¹

The plans of the Allied generals were soon formed; and, taking advantage of the enthusiasm excited by the commemoration of Ramilies, and the arrival of so illustrious a warrior as Eugene, preparations were made for the immediate commencement of active operations. On the 28th, the two generals reviewed the whole army. Villars, on his part, had no intention of declining a conflict. He had chosen his field of battle in an open plain, covered on either flank, well adapted for the operations of cavalry, and had written to Louis for permission to fight. But their designs were soon interrupted by an event which changed the whole fortune of the campaign. Early in June, Eugene received positive orders to march to Germany, with a considerable part of his troops, to oppose a French force which was moving towards the Rhine, to influence the approaching election of the Emperor. He sent, accordingly, twelve battalions and fifty squadrons to man the lines of Ettingen, and cover Frankfort, where the election was to take place; and on his side, Villars detached first fifteen battalions, and as many squadrons, to reinforce the troops, and then ten battalions, and twenty-six squadrons after them, to Alsace. He was very reluctant to make this detachment.² "The army of Flanders," says Villars,

"was weakened, solely to have the credit of saying that they had strengthened that of Germany." On the 13th June, Eugene and Marlborough separated, *for the last time*, with the deepest expressions of regret on both sides, and with gloomy forebodings of the future. The former marched towards the Rhine with his twelve battalions and fifty squadrons, while Marlborough's whole remaining force moved to the right, across the Scarpe into the plain of Lens, in six divisions.¹

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¹ Villars' Mem. ii. 174, 175. Hist. de Marl. iii. 292, 293.

Though Villars was relieved, by the departure of Eugene, from a considerable part of the force opposed to him, and naturally felt desirous of now measuring his strength with his great antagonist in a decisive affair, yet he was restrained from hazarding a general engagement. Louis, trusting to the progress of the Tory intrigues in England, and daily expecting to see Marlborough and the war party overthrown, sent him positive orders not to fight; and soon after, the detachment of twenty-five battalions and forty squadrons, in two divisions, to the Upper Rhine, to watch the movements of Eugene, rendered it a matter of necessity for him to remain on the defensive. Marlborough, therefore, in vain offered battle, and drew up his army in the plain of Lens for that purpose. Though Villars threw eighteen bridges over the Scarpe, and made a show of intending to fight, he cautiously abstained from any steps which might bring on a general battle. It was not without good reason that Louis thus enjoined his lieutenant to avoid compromising his army.² The progress of the negotiations with England gave him the fairest ground for believing that he would obtain nearly all he desired, from the favour with which he was regarded by the

19.
Villars avoids a battle by orders of Louis.

² Villars' Mem. ii. 174-177. Bolingbroke's Correspond. i. 172. Hist. de Marl. iii. 292, 293.

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British cabinet, without running any risk. He had commenced a *separate* negotiation with the court of St James's, which had been favourably received; and Mr Secretary St John had already transmitted to Lord Raby, the new plenipotentiary at the Hague, a sketch of six preliminary articles proposed by the French king, which were to be the basis of a general peace.

20.
Who had
begun a se-
parate and
secret nego-
tiation with
England.

The high tone of these proposals proved how largely Louis counted upon the altered dispositions of the British cabinet. The Spanish succession, the real object of the war, was evaded. Everything was directed to British objects, and regulated by the desire to tempt the commercial cupidity of England to the abandonment of the great objects of her national policy. Real security was promised to the British commerce with Spain, the Indies, and the Mediterranean; the barrier the Dutch had so long contended for was agreed to; a reasonable satisfaction was tendered to the allies of England and Holland; and as to the Spanish succession, it was to be left to "new expedients to the satisfaction of all parties interested." These proposals were favourably received by the British ministry; they were in secret communicated to the Pensionary Heinsius, but concealed from the Austrian and Piedmontese plenipotentiaries; and they were *not communicated to Marlborough* — a decisive proof both of the altered feeling of the cabinet towards that general, and of the consciousness on their part of the tortuous path on which they were now entering.*

After much deliberation, and a due consideration of

* "The Duke of Marlborough has no communication from home on this affair; I suppose he will have none from the Hague."—*Mr Secretary St John to Lord Raby*, 27th April 1711; *BOLINGBROKE'S Corresp.* i. 175.

what could be effected by the diminished force still at his disposal, which, by the successive drafts to Eugene's army, was now reduced to 119 battalions, and 256 squadrons, not mustering above 75,000 combatants, Marlborough determined to break through the enemy's boasted lines, and, after doing so, undertake the siege of Bouchain, the possession of which would give him a solid footing within the French frontier. With this view, he had long and minutely studied the lines of Villars; and he hoped that, even with the force at his disposal, they might be broken through. To accomplish this, however, required an extraordinary combination of stratagem and force; and the manner in which Marlborough contrived to unite them, and bring the ardent mind and lively imagination of his adversary to play into his hands, to the defeat of all the objects he had most at heart, is perhaps the most wonderful part of his whole military achievements.¹

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21.

Marlborough determines to pass the enemy's lines.

¹ Coxe, vi. 52-54.

Rousset, ii. 227, 228.

Hist. de Marlborough, iii. 295, 296.

During his encampment at Lewarde, opposite Villars, the English general had observed that a triangular piece of ground in front of the French position, between Cambray, Aubanchoeil-au-Bac, and the junction of the Sanzet and Scheldt, offered a position so strong that a small body of men might defend it against a very considerable force. He resolved to make the occupation of this inconsiderable piece of ground the pivot on which the whole passage of the lines should be effected. A redoubt at Aubigny, which commanded the approach by Aubanchoeil-au-Bac to this position, was first carried without difficulty. Arleux, which was also fortified, and which covered the bridge of Pallue over the Sanzet, was next attacked by seven hundred men, who issued from Douai in the night. That post also was taken, with one

22.

His project for achieving this.

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hundred and twenty prisoners. Marlborough instantly used all imaginable expedition in strengthening it, and to support it formed a camp of reserve on the glacis of Douai. Villars, having reconnoitred this latter post, made an attempt to surprise it by a combined movement from the side of Bouchain and from that of his own camp. The attack took place on the night of the 9th July; and, though he failed in taking the work, he surprised the Allies at that point, and captured two hundred men and four hundred horses. Though much chagrined at the success of this nocturnal attack, the English general now saw his designs advancing to maturity. He therefore left Arleux to its own resources, and marched towards Bethune. The former was immediately attacked by Marshal Montesquieu, and, after a stout resistance, carried by the French, who made the garrison, five hundred strong, prisoners. Villars immediately razed Arleux to the ground, and withdrew his troops; while Marlborough, who was in hopes the lure of these successes would induce Villars to hazard a general engagement, shut himself up in his tent, and appeared to be overwhelmed with mortification at the checks he had received.¹

¹ Kane's
Mem. 89.
Des. v.
421-428.
Coxe, vi.
53-55.
Rousset, ii.
228, 229.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
297-299.

23.
Prepara-
tions for
executing
it, and de-
ceiving the
enemy,
Aug. 4.

Villars was so much elated with these successes, and with the accounts he received of Marlborough's chagrin, that he wrote to the King of France a vainglorious letter, in which he boasted that he had at length brought his antagonist to a *ne plus ultra*. Meanwhile Marlborough sent off his heavy baggage to Douai; despatched his artillery, under a proper guard, to the rear; and with all imaginable secrecy obtained supplies of bread for the whole troops for six days. Thus disencumbered and prepared, he broke up at four in

the morning on the 1st of August, and marched in eight columns towards the front. During the three following days, the troops were kept collected, and menacing sometimes one part of the French lines and sometimes another, so as to leave the real point of attack in a state of uncertainty. Seriously alarmed, Villars concentrated his whole force opposite the Allies, in the portion of his lines lying between the Scarpe and the Canche, and drew in all his detachments, evacuating even Arleux, the object of so much eager contention some days before, and Aubanchoeil-au-Bac and Pallue. On the evening of the 4th, Marlborough, affecting great chagrin at the check he had received, spoke openly to those around him of his intention of avenging them by a general action, and pointed to the direction the attacking columns were to take. He then returned to the camp, and gave orders to prepare for battle. Gloom hung on every countenance: it appeared nothing short of an act of madness to attack an enemy superior in number, and strongly posted in a camp surrounded with intrenchments, and bristling with cannon. They ascribed it to desperation, produced by the mortifications received from the Government, and feared that, by one rash act, he would lose the fruit of all his victories. Proportionally great was the joy in the French camp, when the men, never doubting they were on the eve of a glorious victory, spent the night in the exultation which, in that excitable people, has so often been the prelude to disaster.¹

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¹ Kane's
Mem. 92,
93. Marlbo-
rough to Mr
Sec. St
John, Aug.
6, 1711.
Des. v. 428.

Having brought the feeling of both armies to this point, and produced a concentration of Villars' army directly in his front, Marlborough, at dusk on the 4th, ordered the drums to beat; and before the roll had

24.
He passes
the lines
with entire
success,
August 4.

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ceased, directions were given for the tents to be struck. Meanwhile Cadogan secretly left the camp, and met twenty-three battalions and seventeen squadrons, drawn from the garrisons of Lille and Tournay, and other towns in the rear, which instantly marched ; and continuing to advance all night, they passed the lines rapidly to the left, at Aubanchoeil-au-Bac, on the Sanzet, and without opposition, at break of day. A little before nine, the main Allied army began to defile rapidly to the left, through the woods of Lillers and Neuville—Marlborough himself leading the van, at the head of fifty squadrons. With such expedition did they march, still holding steadily on to the left, that before five in the morning of the 5th they reached Vitry on the Scarpe, where they found pontoons ready for their passage, and a considerable train of field artillery. At the same time, the English general received the welcome intelligence of Cadogan's success. He instantly despatched orders to every man and horse to press forward without delay. Such was the ardour of the troops, who all saw the brilliant manœuvre by which they had outwitted the enemy, and rendered all their labour abortive, that they marched *sixteen hours* without once halting ; and by ten next morning, the whole had passed the enemy's lines, without opposition, and without firing a shot.¹

¹ Kane's
Mem. 96-99.
Des. v. 428.
Coxe, vi.
60-63.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
301, 302.

25.
Extraordi-
nary success
thus gained.

Villars received intelligence of the night-march having begun at eleven at night ; but so utterly was he in the dark as to the plan his opponent was pursuing, that he came up to Verger, where Marlborough had drawn up his army on the *inner* side of the lines in order of battle, attended only by a hundred dragoons, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner. Altogether, the Allied troops marched thirty-six miles in sixteen hours, the

most part of them in the dark, and crossed several rivers, without either falling into confusion or sustaining any loss. Villars, however, lost none of his turn for bravado in this disaster. Some of his generals having represented the necessity of retiring, saying, "It is to be feared that the enemy will take the opportunity of attacking you in turning the little stream of Mazquezor." "I will save them the trouble," said Villars: "tomorrow I shall go to seek them in the plain of Cambray: were I to make a step to the rear, I should spread a panic through my army, instead of the ardour which now reigns in it." But, despite these declarations, he retired without firing a shot. The annals of war scarcely afford an example of such a success being gained in so bloodless a manner. The famous French lines, which Villars boasted would form the *ne plus ultra* of Marlborough, had been passed without losing a man; the labour of nine months was at once rendered of no avail; and the French army, in deep dejection, had no alternative but to retire under the cannon of Cambray. When in this position, a movement of Villars showed a disposition to cross the Scheldt. To prevent this, which would have frustrated all Marlborough's plans, the English general instantly advanced to within cannon-shot of Cambray, as if about to attack the French army in its strong position there. Villars upon this desisted from his meditated passage. Whilst the enemy were thus held in check, eight pontoon bridges were thrown across the Scheldt, below Etrun, and the Allied army, facing to its left, defiled across the river, under a distant cannonade from the guns of the fortress.¹ It was late on the evening of the 7th before the passage was made good, and midnight ere, drenched by a pelting storm,

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¹ Hist. de Marl. iii. 302, 303. Kane, 96-99. Coxe, vi. 60-65. Marlborough to Mr Sec. St John, Aug. 6, 1711. Des. v. 428.

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26.

Great fame
earned by
Marlbo-
rough by
this exploit.

the troops reached the plain of Avesnes le Sec, where, destitute of all shelter, they lay down to rest.

This great success at once restored the lustre of Marlborough's reputation, and for a short season put to silence his detractors. Eugene, with the generosity which formed so striking a feature in his character, wrote to congratulate him on his achievement;* and even Bolingbroke admitted that this bloodless triumph rivalled his greatest achievements.† The military writers on the Continent are at a loss for words to express their admiration at this great exploit. "Marlborough's manœuvre," says Rousset, "covered him with glory: it was a duel in which the English beat the French general; the armies on either side were present only to render the spectacle more magnificent. In battles and sieges, fortune and the valour of soldiers have often a great share in success; but here everything was the work of the Duke of Marlborough. To gain the lines, they would willingly have compounded for the loss of several thousand lives: thanks to the Duke, they were won without the loss of one; that bloodless victory was entirely owing to his wisdom."¹

¹ Rousset,
ii. 230, 231.

27.

Opinion of
Rousset on
this success.

"Arleux, about which so much noise was made, was the source of all the events which followed. It was taken, and that trifling conquest blinded the enemy: he weakened his army by a large detachment, and, proud of this shadow of good fortune, he menaced Brabant, and

* "No person takes a greater interest in your concerns than myself; your highness has penetrated into the *ne plus ultra*. I hope the siege of Bouchain will not last long."—*Eugene to Marlborough*, 17th August 1711; *Coxe*, vi. 66.

† "My Lord Stair opened to us the general steps which your Grace intended to take, in order to pass the lines in one part or another. It was, however, hard to imagine, and too much to hope, that a plan which con-

thought no more of his lines. The Duke seized the moment, and, by a march similar to that which produced the victory of Oudenarde, surprised the lines without striking a blow. He refused the pitched battle which Villars offered: great men do not combat when their enemies choose; it is a reason the more not to accept it. The French general might have attacked him: that species of combat suits the French soldier better than the defensive; his valour is active, and when he is attacked he is half-beaten. But this was a feint only; and Villars, penetrated with grief at having been outwitted, would willingly have had his revenge. But the inconstancy of fortune, the impossibility of retreat, and the determination formed to besiege Bouchain, were reasons which fully justified the Duke in his determination to leave nothing to chance, and not to trust to fortune what genius had secured."¹

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¹ Rousset,
ii. 231-233.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
306, 307.

Marlborough immediately commenced the siege of Bouchain; but this was an enterprise of no small difficulty, as it was to be accomplished on very difficult ground, in presence of an army superior in force. The investment was formed on the second day after the lines had been passed, and the important piece of ground lying between the Scheldt and the Cette occupied, which might have enabled Villars to communicate with the town, and regain a defensible position. On the morning of the 8th August a bridge was thrown over the Scheldt

28.
Commence-
ment of the
siege of
Bouchain,
August 8.

sisted of so many parts, wherein so many different corps were to co-operate personally together, should entirely succeed, and no one article fail of what your Grace had projected. I most heartily congratulate your Grace on this great event, of which I think no more needs be said, than that you have obtained, without losing a man, such an advantage as we should have been glad to have purchased with the loss of several thousand lives."—*Mr Secretary St John to Marlborough, 31st July 1711; Desp. v. 429.*

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at Neuville, below Bouchain, and sixty squadrons passed over, which barred the road from Douai. Villars upon this threw thirty battalions, under Albergotti, across the Senzet, and made himself master of a hill above, on which he began to erect works, which would have kept open his communications with the town on its western front. Marlborough at once saw this design, and at first determined to storm the works ere they were completed; and, with this view, General Collier, with a strong body of troops, was secretly passed over the river. But Villars, having heard of the design, not only strongly reinforced Albergotti, but attacked the Allied posts at Ivry with such vigour that Marlborough was obliged to counter-march to the opposite bank of the Scheldt in haste, to be at hand to support them. Baffled in this attempt, Marlborough erected a chain of works on the right bank of the Scheldt, from Houdain, through Ivry, to the Cette, near Haspres, while Cadogan strengthened himself with similar works on the left. Villars, however, still retained the fortified position which has been mentioned, and which kept up his communication with the town; and the cutting him off from this was another, and the last, of Marlborough's brilliant field operations.¹

¹ Marlborough to Mr Sec. St John, Aug. 10, 1711. Des. v. 437. Coxe, vi. 67-69. Hist. de Marl. iii. 303, 304.

29.
Interesting operations on both sides during its progress.

Bouchain is situated at the junction of the Senzet and the Scheldt. The Senzet divides the town into two parts, and, in conjunction with the Scheldt, which bounds it on the east, produces a large inundation, traversed only by narrow causeways. The enemy, posted between the Senzet and the Scheldt, could either introduce supplies through the inundation, or, crossing the Senzet, could open a communication with it on the west. The garrison, including a reinforcement of eleven hundred men thrown in by Villars, amounted to nearly six thou-

sand men. Notwithstanding all the diligence with which Villars laboured to strengthen his men on this important position, he could not equal the activity with which the English general strove to supplant them. During the night of the 13th three redoubts, on the left bank of the Senzet, were marked out, which would have completed the French marshal's communication with the town. But on the morning of the 14th they were all stormed by a large body of the Allied troops before the works could be armed. That same day the Allies carried their zig-zag down to the very edge of the morasses, caused by the inundation between the Senzet and the Scheldt, which adjoined Bouchain on the south, so as to command a causeway through the marshes from that town to Cambray, which the French still held, communicating with the besieged town. But, to complete the investment, it was necessary to win this causeway; and this last object was gained by Marlborough with equal daring and success. A battery, commanding the road, had been placed by Villars in a redoubt garrisoned by six hundred men, supported by three thousand more close in their rear. Marlborough, with incredible labour and diligence, constructed two roads, made of fascines, one from the side of the Senzet, and one from that of the Scheldt, through part of the marsh, so as to render it passable to foot-soldiers; and, on the night of the 16th, six hundred chosen grenadiers were sent across them to attack the intrenched battery. They rapidly advanced in the dark till the fascine paths ended, and then, boldly plunging into the marsh, struggled on, with the water often up to their arm-pits, till they reached the foot of the intrenchment, into which they rushed, without firing a shot, with fixed bayonets.¹ So complete was the

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¹ Marlborough to Mr Sec. St. John, Aug. 14, 17, and 20, 1711. Des. v. 445, 450, 453. Hist. de Marl. iii. 307-309.

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surprise that the enemy were driven from their guns with the loss only of six men : the work was carried ; and with such diligence were its defences strengthened that before morning it was in a condition to bid defiance to any attack.

30.
Fall of Bouchain, Sept.
12.

Villars was now effectually cut off from Bouchain, and the operations of the siege were conducted with the utmost vigour. On the night of the 21st, the trenches were opened ; three separate attacks were pushed at the same time against the eastern, western, and southern faces of the town, and a huge train of heavy guns and mortars thundered upon the works without intermission. The progress of the operations, notwithstanding a vigorous defence by the besieged, was unusually rapid. As fast as the outworks were breached they were stormed ; and repeated attempts on the part of Villars to raise the siege were baffled by the skilful disposition and strong ground taken by Marlborough with the covering army. At length, on the 12th September, as the counterscarp was blown down, the rampart breached, and an assault of the fortress in preparation, the chamade was heard, "the sad signal," says the French annalist of the siege, "which terminated the *last*, as it had done all the other sieges of Marlborough." The governor agreed to capitulate ; and the garrison, still three thousand strong, marched out upon the glacis, laid down their arms, and were conducted prisoners to Tournay. There was some difference as to the terms of the capitulation, the besieged insisting that they had surrendered on the same conditions as the garrison of Tournay ; but the English general insisted on their being prisoners of war.¹ The two armies then remained in their respective positions, the French under

¹ Victoires de Marl. iii. 22. Marlborough to Mr Sec. St John, Sept. 14, 1711. Des. v. 490. Coxe, vi. 78-88. Hist. de Marl. iii. 316-318.

the cannon of Cambray, the Allied in the middle of their lines, resting on Bouchain. Marlborough here gave proof of the courtesy of his disposition, as well as of his respect for exalted learning and piety, by planting a detachment of his troops to protect the estates of Fénélon, archbishop of Cambray, and to conduct the grain from thence to the dwelling of the illustrious prelate in the town, which now began to be straitened for provisions.

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The following letter, from a Hanoverian officer employed in the siege, conveys a clear idea of the merit of this, the last and not the least memorable of Marlborough's exploits—"At last we are masters of Bouchain: the siege was short but vigorous; every day was signalised by some action of *éclat*. The garrison was numerous and amply provided with everything; they were made prisoners of war in presence of a hundred thousand men, who made the utmost efforts to succour them. If you reflect on the position of the armies, the situation of the town, the intrenched position of the French in the environs of Warneckin; the communication across the marsh, which gave reason to fear that the siege would come to resemble that of Verue or Kaiserwörth; the works constructed to cut off that communication, worthy of those of Julius Cæsar or Alexander Farnese; the trenches opened between the intrenchments of the enemy and the town;—it must be admitted that this siege must be regarded as one of the prodigies of war. Those of Alexia by Cæsar and of Ostend may have been longer, but they were less glorious. You could not fire a cannon-shot from the trenches without Villars seeing its smoke: he omitted nothing which could interrupt or suspend our works; if he forgot him-

31.
Reflections
on this
siege by a
Hanoverian
officer en-
gaged in it.

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¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
319, 320.32.
Ostensible
prepara-
tions for
war, and
real secret
negotiations
for peace by
the minis-
try, Sept.
27.

self at one passage of his lines, he resumed his whole vigour and courage to make us repent of the attempt. Vain hope! Our general, invincible on all sides, has foreseen and penetrated all his enterprises; and while everything was on fire around him, he alone appeared calm and collected, solely occupied with the good of the army and the interests of Europe.”¹

After the reduction of Bouchain, Marlborough was anxious to commence without delay the siege of Quesnoy, the capture of which would, in that quarter, have entirely broken through the French barrier. He vigorously stimulated his own government accordingly, as well as that at the Hague, to prepare the necessary supplies and magazines, and expressed a sanguine hope that the capture of this last stronghold would be the means of bringing about the grand object of his ambition—a general peace.* The ministry, to appearance, went with alacrity into his projects, and everything seemed to promise another great success, closing the campaign with honour, and probably leading to a glorious and lasting peace. Mr Secretary St John, in particular, wrote in the warmest style of cordiality, approving the project in his own name as well as in that of the Queen, and reiterating the assurances that the strongest representations had been made to the Dutch, with a view to their hearty concurrence. But all this was a mere cover to conceal what the Tories

* “The siege, so far as it depends on me, shall be pushed with all possible vigour, and I do not altogether despair but that, from the success of this campaign, we may hear of some advances made towards that which we so much desire. And I shall esteem it much the happiest part of my life, if I can be instrumental in putting a good end to the war, which grows so burdensome to our country, as well as to our allies.”—*Marlborough to Lord Oxford*, Aug. 20, 1711; *Coxe*, vi. 92.

had really been doing to overturn Marlborough, and abandon the main objects of the war. Unknown to him, the secret negotiation with the French cabinet, through Torcy and the British ministers, by the agency of Mesnager, had been making rapid progress. No representations about providing supplies were made to the Dutch, who were fully in the secret of the pending negotiation ; and on the 27th September, preliminaries of peace, on the basis of the seven articles proposed by Louis, were signed by Mesnager on the part of France, and by the two English secretaries of state, in virtue of a special warrant from the Queen.¹

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¹ Coxe, vi.
92, 93.

The conditions of these preliminaries, which were afterwards embodied in the Treaty of Utrecht, were the acknowledgment of the Queen's title to the throne, and of the Protestant succession, by Louis ; an engagement to take all just and reasonable measures that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united on the same head ; the providing a sufficient barrier to the Dutch, the Empire, and the house of Austria ; and the demolition of Dunkirk, on a proper equivalent. But the crown of Spain was left to the Duke of Anjou, and no provision whatever was made to exclude a Bourbon prince from succeeding to it. Thus the main object of the contest—the exclusion of the Bourbon family from the throne of Spain—was abandoned : and at the close of the most important, successful, and glorious war ever waged by England, terms were agreed to which left to France advantages such as could scarcely have been hoped for by the Cabinet of Versailles as the fruit of a long series of victories.²

33.
Conditions
of the pre-
liminaries
which were
agreed to.

² Coxe, vi.
175-180.

As the new ministers anticipated the most energetic opposition from Marlborough, to a treaty which threatened

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34.
Infamous
libels with
which
Marlbo-
rough is
assailed by
the Tories.

to deprive the nation of the whole fruit of its sacrifices and his victories, they resorted to the most disgraceful means to thwart his opposition and lessen his influence. To accomplish this object, they scrupled not to make use of the utmost licentiousness and the most envenomed shafts of the press, and let loose the whole artillery of a malignant party, clothed in the style and language best calculated to inflame and pervert the public mind. The nature and effect of their calumnies may be judged of by the following passage from Smollett—a historian decidedly hostile to the fame of the illustrious general: “Marlborough, who but a few months before had been so highly extolled and caressed by the representatives of the people, was now become the object of Parliamentary hatred and censure, though no sensible alteration had happened in his conduct or success. That hero, who had retrieved the glory of the British arms—won so many battles—subdued such a number of towns and districts—humbled the pride and checked the ambition of France—secured the liberty of Europe, and, as it were, chained victory to his chariot wheels—was in a few weeks dwindled into an object of contempt and derision. He was ridiculed in libels, and reviled in private conversation. Instances were everywhere repeated of his fraud, avarice, and extortion; of his indolence, cruelty, ambition, and misconduct. Even his courage was called in question; and this consummate general was represented as the lowest of mankind.”¹

¹ Smollett,
c. 10. § 20.

35.
Malignant
misrepresentation
about the
campaign
of 1711.

When this was the view taken of the military achievements and character of the illustrious hero, it was not to be supposed that the campaign of 1711, fruitful as it had been in great and glorious deeds, was to pass over without the usual amount of malignant misrepresentation.

It was not, accordingly, spared on the occasion. The passage of the French lines—perhaps the most marvellous exploit in the whole war, and which St John himself admitted had outdone all Marlborough's former achievements—was called "the crossing of the kennel;" and whatever honour might attach to the enterprise was ascribed to the Count of Hompesch, who led the vanguard. The siege of Bouchain was stigmatised as an inexorable sacrifice of sixteen thousand men for no other object but the capture of a dovecot. Marlborough, who, like many other great men, was unfortunately of a very sensitive disposition, felt these lampoons with a degree of anguish which appears certainly somewhat strange in a warrior advanced in years, and long habituated to the crosses and vexations of public life.¹ *

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It was at first insinuated that they were only in defence against attacks which had emanated from Dr Hans, Marlborough's chaplain; but this was decidedly disproved. Harley, on being applied to on the subject of these libels by the Duke, expressed the utmost abhorrence of them, and an earnest wish that their author could be discovered and punished. "I do assure your Grace," said he in reply, "that I abhor the practice of libels, as mean and disingenuous."² I have made it so familiar to myself by some years' experience, that, as I know I am every week, if not every day, in some libel

¹ Cox, v.
119, 120.

^{36.}
Marlbo-
rough's
letter to
Oxford on
these libels.

² Lord Ox-
ford to
Marlbo-
rough, Oct.
19, 1711.
Cox, v.
122, 123.

* "The authors of these papers, as well on the one side as the other, are not only my enemies, but they are yours, my lord—they are enemies to the Queen, and poison to her subjects; and it would be worth the while to make a strict search after them, that the punishment they deserve may be inflicted upon them. But all the remedy, all the ease, I can at present expect under this mortification is, that you, my lord, would do me the favour to believe me in no way the abettor or encourager of what has given me a mortal wound; but I will endeavour to bear up under it."—*Marlborough to Lord Oxford*, Oct. 19, 1711; COX, v. 122.

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or another, so I would willingly compound that all the ill-natured scribblers should have license to write ten times more against me, upon condition they would write against nobody else. I do assure your Grace, I neither know, nor desire to know, any of the authors ; and as I heartily wish this barbarous war at an end, I shall be very ready to take my part in suppressing them."

37.
Real object
of the Tories
in these at-
tacks on
Marlbo-
rough.

The object, however, of the Tories, in spreading these libels against Marlborough, was too important to be easily relinquished ; and accordingly, notwithstanding the disclaimer of their chief, they persevered in them with the most unrelenting virulence. They were already far engaged, without his knowledge or concurrence, in a clandestine negotiation for peace ; and the credit, even the existence of the ministry, was staked on its being favourably received by the nation. They dreaded therefore the denunciation by the great general, who had so gloriously conducted the war, of a peace which should abandon all its advantages, and leave the enemy in possession of the vantage-ground so threatening to Europe, which had been the object of contention from its commencement. They were in the utmost alarm at the thoughts of the victor of Blenheim denouncing a peace which could only have been justified if the Allies had been defeated on that glorious field. The national feelings might be roused—the public indignation directed to a wrong quarter. Impressed with this idea, and being well aware how easy it is to raise a general outcry against a public man on the most slender foundation, in anything connected with money transactions, they resolved to assail the absent general directly on this subject.¹ By so doing, they hoped he might be awed into silence on the peace ; or, if he still

¹ Coxe, vi.
123.

persisted, discredited ; and the course pursued for these ends was this :—

A board, consisting of Parliamentary commissioners, had been sitting for some time to inquire into certain alleged abuses in the application of the public money in the war in Flanders. They had examined Sir Solomon Medina, contractor for the supply of bread and bread-waggons for the forces in the Netherlands in the pay of the British Government, and he deponed that he had privately paid into the hands of the Duke of Marlborough, from 1707 to 1710 inclusive, annual sums amounting in all to £63,319. This deposition being mysteriously whispered, eagerly sought after, and industriously circulated by the partisans of Government as a state secret, soon became generally known both at home and abroad, and was anxiously laid hold of by the partisans of Administration and the enemies of Marlborough. No sooner did he hear of these calumnies than Marlborough transmitted from the Hague, through Mr Craggs, a brief but decisive refutation of the charge in the following terms :—¹

“ GENTLEMEN,—Having been informed, upon my arrival here yesterday, that Sir Solomon Medina had acquainted you with my having received several sums of money from him, that it may make the less impression upon you, I would lose no time in letting you know that this is no more than what has always been allowed as a perquisite to the general or commander-in-chief of the army in the Low Countries, both before the Revolution and since ; and I do assure you, at the same time, that whatever sums I have received on that account have constantly been applied for the service of the public, in keeping secret correspondence, and getting intelligence of

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38.
Charges brought against Marlborough of having embezzled public money.

¹ Coxe, vi.
124-126.

39.
Marlborough's decisive refutation of the charge.

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the enemy's motives and designs ; and it has fallen so short that I take leave to acquaint you with another article that has been applied to the same use, and which arises from her Majesty's warrant, whereof the enclosed is a copy, though this does not properly relate to the public accounts, being a free gift from the foreign troops. You will have observed by the several establishments, that, before the late King's death, when the Parliament voted 40,000 men for the quota of England, in the Low Countries, 21,612 were to be foreigners, and the rest English : for the last they gave £10,000 a-year for intelligence, and other contingencies, without account ; but his Majesty being sensible, by the experience of the last war, that this sum would not every way answer that service, and being unwilling to apply for any more to the Parliament, he was pleased to order that the foreign troops should contribute $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent towards it ; and I being then his ambassador and commander-in-chief abroad, he directed me to propose it to them, with an assurance that they should have no other stoppage made from their pay. This they readily agreed to ; and her Majesty was afterwards pleased to confirm it by her warrant, upon my acquainting her with the use it was intended for ; and it has accordingly been applied, from time to time, for intelligence and secret service, with such success that, next to the blessing of God on the bravery of our troops, we may, in a great measure, attribute most of the advantages of the war in this country to the timely and good advices procured with the help of this money. And now, Gentlemen, as I have laid the whole matter very fairly before you, and that I hope you will allow I have served my Queen and country with that zeal and faithfulness which becomes

an honest man, the favour I am to entreat of you is, that, when you make your report to the Parliament, you will lay this before them in its true light, so as that they may see this necessary and important part of the war has been provided for, and carried on, without any other expense to the public than the £10,000 a-year; and I flatter myself that, when the accounts of the army in Flanders come under your consideration, you will be sensible the service on this side has been carried on with all the economy and good husbandry that was possible. —I am, Gentlemen, &c.

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¹ Parl. Hist.
10 Anne,
1711, vi.
1050, 1051.

“MARLBOROUGH.”¹ *

Marlborough felt deeply chagrined at this clandestine negotiation, and the atrocious charges against himself, intended to destroy his means of opposing it, which not only deprived him of the main object for which, during his great career, he had been contending, but evinced a duplicity and want of confidence on the part of his own Government, at its close, which was a melancholy return for his inestimable services.† But it was of no avail: the secession of England proved, as he had foreseen from the outset, a death-blow to the confederacy. Finding that nothing more was to be done, either at the head of the army or in directing the negotiations, he returned home by the Brille, after put-

40.
Marlbo-
rough re-
turns home
deeply hurt
at the clan-
destine ac-
commoda-
tion.

* To this memorial was annexed the Queen's warrant, countersigned by Sir Charles Hedges, Secretary of State, authorising the retention of the 2½ per cent.—*Parl. Hist.*, vi. 1052.

† “As you have given me encouragement to enter into the strictest confidence with you, I beg your friendly advice in what manner I am to conduct myself. You cannot but imagine it would be a terrible mortification for me to pass by the Hague when our plenipotentiaries are there, and myself a stranger to their transactions; and what hopes can I have of any countenance at home, if I am not thought fit to be trusted abroad?”—*Marlborough to the Lord-Treasurer*, 21st Oct. 1711.

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ting his army into winter-quarters, and landed at Greenwich on the 17th November. Though well aware of the private envy, as well as political hostility, of which he was the object, and perfectly conscious that the charges against him had been brought forward with no other view but to overawe or neutralise his hostility to the treaty which was in dependence, he did nothing that could lower or compromise his high character and lofty position ; but, in an interview with the Queen, fully expressed his opinion on the impolicy of the course which her ministers were now adopting.* He adopted the same manly course in the noble speech which he made in his place in Parliament, on the debate on the Address. Ministers had put into the royal speech the unworthy expression,—“I am glad to tell you, that, notwithstanding *the arts of those who delight in war*, both place and time are appointed for opening the treaty of a general peace.” Lord Anglesea followed this up by declaring, in the course of the debate, that the country might have enjoyed the blessing of peace soon after the battle of Ramilies, “if it had not been deferred by some person whose interest it was to prolong the war.”¹

¹ Bolingbroke's Letters, i. 480. Coxe, vi. 129-131. Parl. Hist. vi. 1037, 1038.

41. Marlborough's noble speech in the House of Peers, Dec. 10, 1711.

Rising upon this, with inexpressible dignity, and turning to where the Queen sat, Marlborough said—“I appeal to the Queen, whether I did not constantly, while I was plenipotentiary, give her Majesty and her Council an account of all the propositions which were made ; and whether I did not desire instruction for my conduct on this subject. I can declare with a good conscience,

* “I hear that, in his conversation with the Queen, the Duke of Marlborough has spoken against what we are doing ; in short, his fate hangs heavy upon him, and he has of late pursued every counsel which was worst for him.”—*Bolingbroke's Letters*, i. 480—Nov. 24, 1711.

in the presence of her Majesty, of this illustrious assembly, and of God himself, who is infinitely superior to all the powers of the earth, and before whom, by the ordinary course of nature, I shall soon appear to render an account of my actions, that I was very desirous of a safe, honourable, and lasting peace, and was very far from wishing to prolong the war for my own private advantage, as several libels and discourses have most falsely insinuated. My great age, and my numerous fatigues in war, make me ardently wish for the power to enjoy a quiet repose, in order to think of eternity. As to other matters, I have not the least inducement, on any account, to desire the continuance of the war for my own interest, since my services have been so generously rewarded by her Majesty and her Parliament ; but I think myself obliged to make such an acknowledgment to her Majesty and my country, that I am always ready to serve them, whenever my duty may require, to obtain an honourable and lasting peace. Yet I can by no means acquiesce in the measures that have been taken to enter into a negotiation of peace with France, upon the foot of some pretended preliminaries, which are now circulated ; since my opinion is the same as that of most of the Allies, that *to leave Spain and the West Indies to the house of Bourbon will be the entire ruin of Europe*, which I have with all fidelity and humility declared to her Majesty, when I had the honour to wait upon her after my arrival from Holland.”¹

This manly declaration, delivered in the most emphatic manner, produced a great impression. It was warmly supported by Cowper, Halifax, Bishop Burnet, and several other Peers. The defence of Ministers was very feeble : it consisted merely in this—that, since peace

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¹ Parl. Hist.
Dec. 10,
1711, vi.
1038.

42.
Resolution
carried
against
ministers
in the Peers.

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and war were within the prerogative of the Crown, it was not proper to offer any advice or give any opinion on the subject. The Whig majority, however, was predominant in that assembly ; and a resolution against Ministers, and an address embodying these sentiments, were carried in the House of Peers by a majority of twelve, the numbers being sixty-four to fifty-two. To this address the Queen replied, "*I take your thanks kindly, but should be sorry that any one should think I would not do my utmost to recover Spain and the West Indies from the house of Bourbon.*" In the Commons, however, Ministers had a large majority : an amendment moved, "that the House did not doubt that care would be taken that Spain and the Indies should not be left in the hands of any branch of the house of Bourbon, which might endanger the safety of her Majesty's person and Government, the Protestant Succession, the house of Hanover, and the liberty of Europe, was negatived by two hundred and thirty-two votes to a hundred and six;" and an address containing expressions similar to those used by Lord Anglesea, reflecting on Marlborough, was introduced and carried. The words used were, "We presume to assure your Majesty we will take all possible care to preserve that unanimity your Majesty has recommended to us, and use our utmost endeavours *to disappoint as well the arts and desires of those who delight in war*, as the hopes the enemies may vainly have entertained of receiving advantage from any divisions amongst us."¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
vi. 1045.

The Whig majority, however, continued firm in the Upper House ; and the leaders of that party began to entertain sanguine hopes of success. The Queen had let fall some peevish expressions in regard to her

ministers. She had given her hand, in retiring from the House of Peers on the 15th December, to the Duke of Somerset, instead of her own Lord-Treasurer: it was apprehended that her old partiality for Marlborough was about to return. Mrs Masham was in the greatest alarm; and St John declared to Swift that the Queen was false.* The ministers of the whole Alliance seconded the efforts of the Whigs, and strongly represented the injurious effects which would ensue to the cause of European independence in general, and the interests of England in particular, if the preliminaries which had been agreed to should be made the basis of a general peace. The Dutch made strong and repeated representations on the subject; and the Elector of Hanover delivered a memorial, strongly urging the danger which would ensue if Spain and the Indies were allowed to remain in the hands of a Bourbon prince. These alarming symptoms soon produced their effect upon the selfish and timid—that is, the vast majority of men. The waverers showed themselves. The Duke of Somerset had already seceded from his new friends, and was openly decrying their measures. The Duke of Buckingham hung back, and scarcely defended the measures of Government. The Duke of Shrewsbury declined the difficult situation of minister plenipotentiary at the congress, and began to make secret advances to Marlborough. The coalition was breaking up, the whole Tory party were in despair, and the indecision of the Queen proved that the crisis had arrived which invariably proves fatal to weak minds.¹

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43.
Counter address carried in the Commons, and irresolution of the Queen.

¹ Conduct, 266. Coxe, vi. 146, 147.

* SWIFT'S *Journal to Stella*, Dec. 8, 1711.—Swift said to the Lord-Treasurer, in his usual ironical style, "If there is no remedy, your lordship will lose your head; but I shall only be hung, and so carry my body entire to the grave."

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1711.

44.

Oxford dis-
misses
Marlboro-
rough, Dec.
31.

In this extremity the Tories were saved, Marlborough disgraced, and the face of Europe changed, by the vigour and audacity of one man. Oxford showed himself on this crisis not wanting in that quality which Bacon, and, after him, Danton, have described as the first requisite in civil conflicts—"Boldness, boldness, boldness." Being convinced that the peace could not be carried through, and that the Tories would fall, if Marlborough continued in power, he resolved on his dismissal; and being well aware that no charge is so readily credited by the vulgar, because there is none to which they are themselves so much inclined, as one founded on an alleged embezzlement of the public money, he resolved to make such a charge the foundation of his impeachment. Deeming themselves pushed to extremities, and having failed in all attempts to detach Marlborough from the Whigs, Bolingbroke and the Ministers resolved on the desperate measure of bringing forward an accusation against him, of fraud and peculation in the management of the public moneys intrusted to him in the Flemish campaign. The charges were founded on the report of the commissioners already mentioned, to whom the matter had been remitted, and which accused the Duke of having appropriated £63,319 of the public moneys destined for the use of the English troops, and £282,366, as a per-centage of two per cent on the sum paid to foreign ambassadors during the ten years of the war. In reply to these infamous insinuations, the letter of the Duke to the commissioners was published on the 27th December, in which he entirely refuted the charges, and showed that he had never received any sums or perquisites not sanctioned by previous and uniform usage, and far

fewer than had been received by the general in the reign of William III. And in regard to the £282,000 of per-centage on foreign subsidies, this was proved to have been a voluntary gift from those powers to the English general, authorised by their signatures and sanctioned by warrants from the Queen. This answer made a great impression ; but Ministers had gone too far to retreat, and they ventured on a step which, for the honour of the country, has never, even in the worst times, been since repeated. Trusting to their majority in the Commons, and without awaiting the issue of any trial or judicial investigation of the charges, they dismissed the Duke from all his situations on the 31st December;* and in order to stifle the voice of justice in the Peers, on the following day patents were issued calling *twelve* new peers to the Upper House. They were introduced amidst the groans of the House : the Whig noblemen, says a contemporary annalist, "casting their eyes on the ground as if they had been invited to the funeral of the peerage."¹

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¹ Cunningham, ii. 367. Conduct, 311. Lockhart Papers, i. 351-362. Coxe, vi. 151, 152.

Unbounded was the joy diffused among the enemies of England by these unparalleled measures. On hearing of Marlborough's fall, Louis XIV. said with triumph, "The dismissal of Marlborough will do all we can desire." The court of St Germain's was in exultation ; and the general joy of the Jacobites, both at home and abroad, was sufficient to demonstrate how formidable an enemy to their cause they regarded the Duke, and how destitute of truth are the attempts to show that he had

45.
Universal joy among the enemies of England at these measures.

* "Being informed that an information against the Duke of Marlborough was laid before the House of Commons by the commissioners of the public accounts, Her Majesty thought fit to dismiss him from all his employments that the matter might undergo an impartial investigation."—COXE, vi. 152.

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been engaged in a secret design to restore the exiled family. Marlborough disdained to make any defence of himself in Parliament ; but an able answer on his part was prepared and circulated, which entirely refuted the whole charges against the illustrious general. So convinced were Ministers of this, that, contenting themselves with resolutions against him in the House of Commons, where their influence was predominant, they declined to prefer any impeachment or accusation in the Upper House, swamped even as it was by their recent creations. The greatness of Marlborough was proved, the vindication of his character, the refutation of all the false and malignant accusations which had been brought against him, rendered complete, by the very measures adopted by his enemies. The French were in exultation, the court of St Germain in ecstasies, every real patriot in England in mourning, the giddy multitude in amazement, the constitution violated for his destruction, and not even a charge preferred against him after his overthrow had been effected.¹

¹ Somerville's
Queen
Anne, 498.
Conduct,
311. Coxe,
vi. 154, 155.

^{46.}
Marlborough's noble letter to the Queen on his dismissal, Jan. 3, 1712.

Upon receiving the letter intimating his dismissal, which was written with the Queen's own hand, Marlborough, in a transport of indignation at such unparalleled baseness and ingratitude, threw it into the fire. But he wrote the following noble letter to his sovereign on the occasion, which, if anything could, might have convinced her of the generosity of his character, and his entire innocence of all the charges which the malignity of faction had heaped up against him :—" Madam,—I am very sensible of the honour your Majesty does me, in dismissing me from your service by a letter of your own hand ; though I find by it that my enemies have been able to prevail with your Majesty to do it in the

manner that is most injurious to me. And if their malice and inveteracy against me had not been more powerful with them than the consideration of your Majesty's honour and justice, they would not have influenced you to impute the occasion of my dismissal to a false and malicious insinuation, contrived by themselves, and made public, when there was no opportunity for me to give in my answer, which they must needs be conscious would fully detect the falsehood and malice of their aspersions, and not leave them that handle for bringing your Majesty to such extremes against me. But I am much more concerned at an expression in your Majesty's letter, which seems to complain of the treatment you had met with. I know not how to understand that word, nor what construction to make of it. I know I have always endeavoured to serve your Majesty faithfully and zealously, through a great many undeserved mortifications. But if your Majesty does intend by that expression to find fault with my not coming to the cabinet council, I am very free to acknowledge that my duty to your Majesty and country would not give me leave to join in the counsels of a man who, in my opinion, puts your Majesty upon all manner of extremities. And it is not my opinion only, but the opinion of all mankind, that the friendship of France must needs be destructive to your Majesty, there being in that court a root of enmity, irreconcilable to your Majesty's government, and the religion of these kingdoms. I wish your Majesty may never find the want of so faithful a servant as I have always endeavoured to approve myself to you.—I am, with the greatest duty and submission," &c.¹

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¹ Conduct,
312.

In the midst of this disgraceful scene of passion, envy,

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1712.

47.

Eugene's
arrival in
England,
and noble
conduct.

and ingratitude, Prince Eugene arrived in London, for the purpose of trying to stem the torrent, and, if possible, prevent the secession of England from the Confederacy. This was justly deemed by the Allies a matter of the utmost consequence, for they already anticipated, what the event soon after proved to be true, that the conclusion of a separate peace by England would at once break the bond and ruin the fortunes of the Grand Alliance. He was lodged with the Lord-Treasurer, and the generous Prince omitted no opportunity of testifying, in the day of his tribulation, his undiminished respect for his illustrious rival. "It is a mistake," he observed, "to suppose that I came to England to give the least disturbance to the Ministry; but it is wholly inconsistent with my honour and temper to be wanting in respect to a friend in his adverse fortune, for whom I always professed so much regard in the time of his prosperity." The Treasurer having said to him at a great dinner, "I consider this day as the happiest of my life, since I have the honour to see in my house the greatest captain of the age."—"If it be so," replied Eugene, "I owe it to your lordship;" alluding to his dismissal of Marlborough, which had caused him to cease to be one. On another occasion, some one having pointed out a passage in one of the libels against Marlborough, in which he was said to have been "perhaps *once* fortunate,"—"It is true," said Eugene, "he was *once* fortunate; and it is the greatest praise which can be bestowed on him: for, as he was *always* successful, that implies that all his other successes were owing to his own conduct."¹

¹ Burnet's
Hist. of his
Own Times,
vi. 116.

Alarmed at the weight which Marlborough might derive from the presence and support of so great a commander, and the natural sympathy of all generous minds

aroused by the cordial admiration which these two great men entertained for each other, the Ministers had recourse to a pretended conspiracy, which, it was alleged, had been discovered, on the part of Marlborough and Eugene, to seize the government and dethrone the Queen on the 17th November. St John and Oxford had too much sense to publish such a ridiculous statement ; but it was made the subject of several secret examinations before the Privy Council, in order to augment the apprehensions and secure the concurrence of the Queen in their measures. Such as it was, the tale was treated as a mere malicious invention, even by the contemporary foreign annalists, though it has since been repeated as true by more than one party-historian of our own country. This ridiculous calumny, and the atrocious libels as to the embezzlement of the public money, however, produced the desired effect. They inflamed the mind of the Queen, and removed that vacillation in regard to the measures of Government, from which so much danger had been apprehended by the Tory administration. Having answered the desired end, they were allowed quietly to go to sleep. No proceedings in the House of Peers, or elsewhere, followed the resolutions of the Commons condemnatory of Marlborough's financial administration in the Low Countries. His defence, published in the newspapers, though abundantly vigorous, was neither answered nor prosecuted as a libel on the commissioners or the House of Commons ; and the alleged Stuart conspiracy was never more heard of, till it was long after drawn from its slumber by the malice of English party spirit.¹

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1712.

48.

Machina-
tions of the
Tories to
inflame the
Queen
against
Marlbo-
rough.

¹ Swift's
Queen
Anne, 59.
Continua-
tion of Ra-
pin, xviii.
468. Coxe,
vi. 167-172.
Mém. de
Torcy, iii.
268, 269.

Meanwhile the negotiations at Utrecht for a general peace continued, and St John and Oxford soon found

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1712.

49.

Louis rises
in his de-
mands at
Utrecht,
which turns
into a pri-
vate treaty
between
France and
England.

themselves embarrassed by the extravagant pretensions which their own favour to the cause of France had revived in the plenipotentiaries of Louis. So great was the general indignation excited by the publication of the preliminaries at Utrecht, that St John felt the necessity of discontinuing any general negotiation, and converting it into a private correspondence between the plenipotentiaries of the English and French crowns.* Great difficulty was experienced in coming to an accommodation, in consequence of the rising demands of the French ambassadors, who, deeming themselves secure of support from the English ministry, not only positively refused to abandon Spain and the Indies, but now demanded the Netherlands for the Elector of Bavaria, and the cession of Lille and Tournay in return for the seizure of Dunkirk. The sudden death, however, first of the Dauphiness of France, and then of the Dauphin, the former of whom was carried off by a malignant fever on the 12th, the latter on the 18th February 1712, followed by the death of their eldest son on the 23d, produced feelings of commiseration for the aged monarch, now in his seventy-third year, and broken down by misfortunes, which rendered the progress of the separate negotiations more easy. At length, though not without great difficulty, they arrived at an accommodation. England agreed to abandon its allies, and the main object of the war, on condition that a guarantee should be obtained against the crowns of France and Spain being united on the same head. On this frail security, and

* "The French will see that there is a possibility of reviving the love of war in our people, by the indignation that has been expressed at the plan given in at Utrecht."—*Mr Secretary St John to Brit. Plenip.*, Dec. 28, 1711; *BOLINGBROKE'S Corresp.* ii. 93.

the promised demolition of Dunkirk, the English ministry agreed to withdraw their contingent from the Allied army; and to induce the Dutch to follow their example, Ypres was offered to them on the same terms as Dunkirk had been to Great Britain. So overjoyed was Louis at the signing of these conditions, on the part of Bolingbroke, that he immediately sent Queen Anne a present of six splendid dresses, and *two thousand five hundred bottles of champagne*.¹

The disastrous effects of this secret and dishonourable secession, on the part of England, from the confederacy, were soon apparent. Great had been the preparations of the Continental allies for continuing the contest; and while the English contingent remained with them, their force was irresistible. Prince Eugene was at the head of the army in Flanders, and, including the British forces under the Duke of Ormond, it amounted to the immense force of 122,000 effective men, with 120 guns, 16 howitzers, and an ample pontoon train. To oppose this, by far the largest army the French had yet had to confront in the Low Countries, Villars had scarcely at his command 100,000 men, and they were ill equipped, imperfectly supplied with artillery, and grievously depressed in spirit by a long series of disasters. Eugene commanded the forces of the confederates; for although the English ministry had been lavish in their promises of unqualified support, the Dutch had begun to entertain serious suspicions of their sincerity, and bestowed the command on that tried officer instead of the Duke of Ormond, who had succeeded Marlborough in the command of the English contingent. But Marlborough's soul still directed the movements of the army; and Eugene's plan of the campaign was precisely that which that great

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¹ Capefigue,
Hist. de
Louis XIV.
vi. 249.
Coxe, vi.
194.

50.

Forces of
the Allies
and French
in Flanders,
and desperate
situation of
Louis.

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commander had chalked out at the close of the preceding one. This was to besiege Quesnoy and Landrecies, *the last* of those fortresses forming the iron barrier of France which in this quarter protected the frontier, and immediately after to inundate the open country and advance as rapidly as possible to Paris. It was calculated they might reach it in *ten* marches from Landrecies; and it was well known that there was neither a defensible position nor a fortress of any sort to arrest the invaders' march. Already the light horse had overspread the country as far as the Oise, within forty miles of Paris, and a plan had even been formed for surprising the King in his palace of Versailles, by a body of hussars, which had very nearly succeeded.* The uniforms of the Allied light horse had been seen within a few leagues of Versailles, where they had spread unbounded terror through the palace of the Grand Monarque. The court of Versailles was in despair; the general opinion was, that the King should leave Paris, and retire to Blois; and although the proud spirit of Louis recoiled at such a proposal, yet, in taking leave of Marshal Villars, he declared, with a spirit worthy of his race—"Should a disaster occur, I will go to Peronne or St Quentin, collect all my troops, and with you risk a last effort, determined to perish or save the state. I will put myself at the head of my army, and command it in person: I shall gain the battle or fall in combating: there is no other part to take; it is the only one that is glorious, and worthy of me."¹

¹ Mém. de Villars, ii. 197. Capefigue, Hist. de Louis XIV. 251-257. Hist. de Marl. iii. 425.

* "La Scarpe une fois passée, toute la province de Picardie fut couverte de partisans ennemis; on vit des hussards Allémands sur les bords de l'Oise, des hardis cavaliers vinrent même à quelques lieues de Versailles pour effrayer le vieux Monarque, dans son palais de Versailles, plein de grandeur et de merveilles."—CAPEFIGUE, *Louis XIV.* vi. 147, 148.

But the French monarch was spared this last desperate alternative. The defection of the British cabinet saved his throne, when all his means of defence were exhausted. Eugene, on opening the campaign on the 1st May, anxiously inquired of the Duke of Ormond whether he had authority to act vigorously in the campaign, and received an answer from that gallant and high-spirited general, that he had the same authority as the Duke of Marlborough, and was prepared to join in attacking the enemy. Preparations were immediately made for forcing the enemy's lines, which covered Quesnoy, previous to an attack on that fortress. But at the very time that this was going on, the work of perfidious defection was consummated. On May 10, Mr Secretary St John sent positive orders to Ormond to *take no part in any siege or general engagement*, as the questions at issue between the contending parties were on the point of adjustment.* Intimation of this private order was sent to the court of France, but it was directed to be kept a positive secret from the Allied generals. Ormond, upon the receipt of these orders, opened a private correspondence with Villars, informing him that their troops were no longer enemies,¹ and that the future movements

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51.

The defection of Britain saves France, May 10.

¹ Bolingbroke's Correspond. ii. 320. Hist. de Marib. iii. 419, 420.

* "Her Majesty, my lord, has reason to believe that we shall come to an agreement upon the great article of the union of the monarchies, as soon as a courier sent from Versailles to Madrid can return. It is, therefore, the Queen's *positive command* to your Grace that *you avoid engaging in any siege, or hazarding a battle*, till you have further orders from her Majesty. I am, at the same time, directed to let your Grace know, that you are *to disguise the receipt of this order*; and her Majesty thinks you cannot want pretences for conducting yourself, without owning that which might at present have an ill effect if it was publicly known.—*P.S.* I had almost forgot to tell your Grace that communication is made of this order to the court of France, so that if the Marshal de Villars takes, in any private way, notice of it to you, your Grace will answer it accordingly."—*Mr Secretary St John to the Duke of Ormond*, May 10, 1712; BOLINGBROKE'S *Corresp.* ii. 320.

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52.
Siege and
capture of
Quesnoy,
July 4.

of the forces under his command would only be to get forage and provisions.

This correspondence was unknown to Eugene ; but circumstances soon brought the defection of England to light. In the middle of it, the Allied forces had passed the Scheldt, and taken post between Noyelles and the Brioise, close to Villars' position. To bring the sincerity of the English to a test, Eugene proposed a general attack on the enemy's line, which was open and exposed, on the 28th May. *But Ormond, in obedience to his orders, declined,* requesting the operation might be delayed for a few days. The defection was now apparent, and the Dutch deputies loudly condemned such dishonourable conduct ; but Eugene, anxious to make the most of the presence of the British troops, though their co-operation could no longer be relied on, proposed to besiege Quesnoy, which was laid open by Villars' retreat. Ormond, who felt acutely the painful and discreditable situation in which, without any fault of his own, he was placed, could not refuse, and the investment took place that very day. The operations were conducted by *the Dutch and Imperial troops alone* ; and the town was taken, after a siege of six weeks, on the 4th July.¹

¹ Eugene to Marlborough, June 9, 1712. Coxe, vi. 199. Hist. de Marl. iii. 421, 422.

53.
Universal indignation which the defection of England excites in the Allied powers.

This disgraceful defection on the part of the English government excited, as well it might, the utmost indignation among the Allies, and produced mingled feelings of shame and mortification among all real patriots or men of honour in this country. By abandoning the contest in this manner, when it was on the very point of being crowned with success, the English lost the fruit of TEN costly and bloody campaigns, and suffered the war to terminate without attaining the main object

for which it had been undertaken. Louis XIV., defeated, and all but ruined, was permitted to retain for his grandson the Spanish succession ; and England, victorious, and within sight, as it were, of Paris, was content to halt in the career of victory, and lost the opportunity, never to be regained for a century to come, of permanently restraining the ambition of France. It was the same as if, a few days after the battle of Waterloo, England had concluded a separate peace, guaranteeing the throne of Spain to Joseph Buonaparte, and providing only for its not being held also by the Emperor of France. No stronger evidence can be imagined of the extent to which faction and party spirit had perverted the minds of the Government and the nation, than that such a defection, after so glorious a war, could have been for a moment thought of by the one, or tolerated by the other. But it has been the same in other days. The first triumph of the factious is over the national feelings.

Lord Halifax gave vent to the general indignation of all generous and patriotic men, when he said, in the debate on the Address, on 28th May, after enumerating the proud list of victories which, since the commencement of the war, had attended the arms of England,—“But all this pleasing prospect is totally effaced by the orders given to the Queen’s general, not to act offensively against the enemy. I pity that heroic and gallant general, who, on other occasions, took delight to charge the most formidable corps and strongest squadrons, and cannot but be uneasy at his being fettered with shackles, and thereby prevented from reaping the glory which he might well expect from leading on troops so long accustomed to conquer. I pity the Allies, who have relied

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54.
Eloquent
speech of
Lord Hal-
ifax against
the Peace in
the House
of Peers.

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upon the aid and friendship of the British nation, perceiving that what they had done at so great an expense of blood and treasure is of no effect, as they will be exposed to the revenge of that power against whom they have been so active. I pity the Queen, her royal successors, and the present and future generations of Britain, when they shall find the nation deeply involved in debt, and that the common enemy who occasioned it, though once near being sufficiently humbled, does still triumph, and design their ruin; and are informed that this proceeds from the conduct of the British cabinet, in neglecting to make a right use of these advantages and happy occasions which their own courage and God's blessing had put into their hands."¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
May 28,
1712, vi.
1130. Lock-
hart Papers,
i. 392.

55.
Marlbo-
rough's
speech in
seconding
the motion
of Halifax.

Marlborough seconded the motion of Halifax in a speech of peculiar interest, as the last which he made on the conduct of this eventful war. "Although," said he, "the negotiations for peace may be far advanced, yet I can see no reason which should induce the Allies or ourselves to remain inactive, and not push on the war with the utmost vigour, as we have incurred the expense of recruiting the army for the service of another year. That army is now in the field; and it has often occurred that a victory or a siege produced good effects and manifold advantages, when treaties were still further advanced than in the present negotiation. And as I am of opinion that we should make the most we can for ourselves, the only infallible way to force France to an entire submission, is to besiege and occupy Cambray or Arras, and to carry the war into the heart of the kingdom. But as the troops of the enemy are now encamped, it is impossible to execute that design, unless they are withdrawn from their position; and as they

cannot be reduced to retire from want of provisions, they must be attacked and forced. For the truth of what I say, I appeal to a noble duke, (Argyll,) whom I rejoice to see in this house, because he knows the country, and is as good a judge of these matters as any person now alive." Argyll, though a bitter personal enemy of Marlborough, thus appealed to, said—"I do indeed know that country, and the situation of the enemy in their present camp, and I agree with the noble duke, that it is impossible to remove them without attacking and driving them away; and, until that is effected, neither of the two sieges alluded to can be undertaken. I likewise agree that the capture of these two towns is the most effectual way to carry on the war with advantage, and would be a fatal blow to France. Two years before, the confederates might have gained such an advantage, if they had laid siege to Arras and Cambray, instead of amusing themselves with the insignificant conquests of Aire, Bethune, and St Venant."¹

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¹ Parl. Hist.
vi. 1137.
Coxe, vi.
192, 193.

Notwithstanding the creation of twelve peers to swamp the Upper House, it is doubtful how the division would have gone, had not Lord Strafford, a cabinet minister, observed, in reply to the charge that the British government was about to conclude a separate peace,—“Nothing of that nature has ever been intended; for such a peace would be so *foolish, villanous, and knavish*, that every servant of the Queen must answer for it with his head, to the nation. The Allies *are acquainted with our proceedings, and satisfied with our terms*.” This statement was made by a British minister, in his place in Parliament, on the 28th May, eighteen days *after* the private letter had been despatched from Mr Secretary St John to the Duke of Ormond, already

56.
The Ministers falsely declare the Allies to be parties to the negotiation.

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quoted, mentioning the private treaty with Louis, enjoining him to keep it secret from the Allies, and to communicate clandestinely with Villars. But such a declaration, coming from an accredited minister of the crown, produced a great impression, and ministers prevailed by a majority of sixty-eight to forty. In the course of the debate, Earl Poulett let fall such cutting expressions against Marlborough, for having, as he alleged, led his troops to certain destruction, in order to profit by the sale of the officers' commissions,* that the Duke, without deigning a reply, sent him a challenge on leaving the House. The agitation, however, of the Earl, who was less cool than the iron veteran in the prospect of such a meeting, revealed what was going forward, and, by an order from the Queen, the affair was terminated without bloodshed.¹

¹ Lockhart Papers, i. 392. Coxe, vi. 196, 197.

57.
Conditions of the Treaty of Utrecht, June 6.

It soon appeared what foundation there was for the assertion of the Queen's ministers, that England was engaged in no separate negotiation for a peace. On the 6th June, the outlines of the treaty, which afterwards became so famous as the PEACE OF UTRECHT, were divulged. The Duke of Anjou was to renounce for ever, for himself and his descendants, all claim to the French crown; and the crown of Spain was to descend, by *the male line* only, to his heirs, and failing them to certain princes of the Bourbon line by *male* descent, always excluding him who was possessed of the French crown.† Gibraltar and Minorca remained to

* "No one can doubt the Duke of Ormond's bravery; but he is not like a certain general who led troops to the slaughter, to cause a great number of officers to be knocked on the head in a battle, or against stone walls, in order to fill his pockets by the sale of their commissions."—*Parl. Hist.*, vi. 1137.

† "The words of the treaty, which subsequent events have rendered of

England ; Dunkirk was to be demolished ; the Spanish Netherlands were to be ceded to Austria, with Naples, Milan, and Sardinia ; the barrier towns were to be ceded to the Dutch, as required in 1709, with the exception of two or three places. Spain and her Indian colonies remained with the Duke of Anjou and his male heirs, as King of Spain. And thus, at the conclusion of the most glorious and successful war recorded in English history, did the English cabinet leave to France the great object of the contest,—the crown of Spain placed on the head of a prince of the Bourbon race, and that of its magnificent Indian colonies. With truth did Marlborough observe, in the debate on the preliminaries—“ The measures pursued in England for the last year are directly contrary to her Majesty’s engagements with the Allies, sully the triumphs and glories of her reign, and will render the English name odious to all other nations.” It was all in vain. The people loudly clamoured for peace ; the cry against the taxes was irresistible. The Tory ministry was seconded by a vast numerical majority throughout the country. The peace was approved of by large majorities in both Houses.¹ Parliament was soon after prorogued ; and Marlborough, seeing his public

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¹ Schoell,
Hist. de
Trait. ii.
99-105.
Dumont,
Corp. Dip.
viii. P. i. p.
339. Parl.
Hist. vi.
1146.

importance on this point, were these :—Philip V. King of Spain renounced “ à toutes prétentions, droits, et titres que lui et sa postérité avaient ou pourraient avoir à l’avenir à la couronne de France. Il consentit pour lui et sa postérité que ce droit fût tenu et considéré comme passé au Duc de Berry, son frère, et à ses descendants et postérité *male* ; et au défaut de ce Prince et de sa postérité *male*, au Duc de Bourbon son cousin et à ses *héritiers*, et aussi successivement à tous les princes du sang de France.” The Duke of Saxony and his *male* heirs were called to the succession, failing Philip V. and his *male* heirs. This act of renunciation and entail of the crown of Spain on *male* heirs, was ratified by the Cortes of Castile and Aragon ; by the parliament of Paris, by Great Britain and France in the sixth article of the Treaty of Utrecht.—*Vide* SCHOELL, *Hist. de Trait.*, ii. 99-105 ; and DUMONT, *Corp. Dipl.*, tom. viii. P. i. p. 339.

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58.

Mournful
separation
of the Eng-
lish contin-
gent from
the Allies.

career terminated, solicited and obtained passports to go abroad, which he soon afterwards did.

Great was the mourning, and loud the lamentations, both among the British and Allied troops, when the fatal day arrived that the former were to separate from their old companions in arms. On the 16th July, the very day on which Quesnoy surrendered, the last of their long line of triumphs, Ormond, having exhausted every sort of procrastination to postpone the dreaded hour, was compelled to order the English troops to march. He in vain, however, gave a similar order to the auxiliaries in British pay. The hereditary prince of Cassel replied—"The Hessians would gladly march, if it were to fight the French." Another, "We do not serve for pay, but fame." The native English, however, were compelled to obey the order of their sovereign, and they set out, twelve thousand strong, from the camp at Cambrésis. Of all the Germans in British pay, only one battalion of Holstein men, and a regiment of dragoons from Liege, accompanied them. Silent and dejected they took their way; the men kept their eyes on the ground, the officers did not venture to return the parting salute of the comrades who had so long fought and conquered by their side. Not a word was spoken on either part—the hearts of all were too full for utterance; but the averted eye, the mournful air, the blush of indignation, told the deep emotion which was everywhere felt. It seemed as if the Allies were following to the grave, with profound affliction, the whole body of their British comrades. But when the troops reached their resting-place for the night, and the suspension of arms was proclaimed at the head of each regiment, the general indignation became so vehement that even the bonds of

military discipline were unable to restrain it. A universal cry, succeeded by a loud murmur, was heard through the camp. The British soldiers were seen tearing their hair, casting their muskets on the ground, and rending their clothes, uttering all the while furious exclamations against the government which had so shamefully betrayed them. The officers were so overwhelmed with vexation that they sat apart in their tents looking on the ground, through very shame; and for several days they shrunk from the sight even of their fellow-soldiers. Many left their colours to serve with the Allies, others withdrew, and whenever they thought of Marlborough and their days of glory, tears filled their eyes.¹

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¹ Cunningham, ii. 452.
Milner, 356.

It soon appeared that it was not without reason that these gloomy presentiments prevailed on both sides, as to the consequences of the British withdrawing from the contest. So elated were the French by this withdrawal that they speedily lost all sense of gratitude, and even honesty, and refused to give up Dunkirk to the British; and the cession was only effected with great difficulty, on the earnest entreaties of the British government. So great were the difficulties which beset the negotiation that St John was obliged to repair in person to Paris, where he remained *incognito* for a considerable time, and effected a compromise with regard to the objects still in dispute between the parties. The secession of England from the confederacy was now openly announced; and, as the Allies refused to abide by her preliminaries, the separate negotiation continued between the two countries, and lingered on for nearly a year after the suspension of arms. St John now became sensible, when it was too late, of the enormous

59.
Great difficulties now experienced in the negotiation with France.

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1712.

¹ Boling-
broke's Cor-
resp. ii. 378.
Coxe, vi.
211-213.

60.
Landrecies
is ineffectu-
ally be-
sieged by
Eugene.

² Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
426, 427.
Mém. de
Villars, ii.
396-421.
Rousset, ii.
341, 342.

error into which he had fallen in committing England to a separate negotiation, and trusting to the gratitude of his enemies at such a defection for a suitable return in the conditions of the treaty. No return whatever was made : the claims of Louis, not only against the Allies, but against England, every day became more exorbitant ; and encouraged by the advantages which their withdrawing from the field gave him in military operations, his demands rose in proportion, and the negotiation was repeatedly on the verge of rupture.¹

Meanwhile Eugene, after the departure of the British, continued his operations, and laid siege to Landrecies, the last of the barrier fortresses on the road to Paris, in the end of July. But it soon appeared that England had been the soul of the confederacy, and that it was the tutelary arm of Marlborough which had so long averted disaster and chained victory to its standards. Nothing but defeat and misfortune attended the Allies after her secession. Even the great and tried abilities of Eugene were inadequate to procure for them one single success, after the colours of England ceased to wave in their ranks. Encouraged by his long-continued success while acting with the English troops, he did not consider the diminution of force which their secession occasioned, or the means of augmenting their army which, by drawing reinforcements from the garrisons no longer threatened, it afforded to the enemy. Eugene, during the investment of Landrecies, stationed his magazines at Marchiennes, his park of artillery and ammunition at Quesnoy.² He placed five thousand foot and three thousand horse at Denain, and three thousand between Denain and Thians, to keep up the communication between it and the bulk of his forces, which were

encamped on the Escaillon, ready to succour any point which might be attacked.

On this state of matters, Villars conceived and executed, with great ability, a project attended with the most important effects on the issue of the war. He drew together the garrisons from the neighbouring towns no longer threatened by the English troops, and suddenly passing the Scheldt, surprised at Denain a body of twelve thousand men, stationed there for the purpose of facilitating the passage of convoys to the besieging army. This body was totally defeated, with a loss of eight thousand men. The blow was considerable in itself, but it was rendered doubly so by the position of Denain, a fortified post on the Scheldt, which kept up the communication between the portion of Eugene's army which was besieging Landrecies and that before Marchiennes. It cut his army in two ; and Eugene had the mortification of arriving in person on the opposite side of the Scheldt at the close of the action, and witnessing the surrender of Lord Albemarle and three thousand men, without being able to render any assistance. This disaster rendered it necessary to raise the siege of Landrecies, and Villars immediately resumed the offensive. Douai was speedily invested : a fruitless effort of Eugene to retain it only exposed him to the mortification of witnessing its surrender. Not expecting so sudden a reverse of fortune, the fortresses recently taken were not provided with provisions or ammunition, and were in no condition to make any effectual resistance. "The effects," says Marshal Saxe, "of this affair were inconceivable ; it made the difference of above one hundred battalions to the two armies. Eugene was obliged to throw garrisons into the towns which were

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61.

Villars destroys the detachment at Denain, July 24.

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¹ Mém. de
Villars, ii.
396-421.
Capefigue,
Hist. de
Louis XIV.
272-275.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
430-443.

threatened; and Villars, seeing that his own fortresses were no longer threatened, drew out their garrisons, and augmented his army by above fifty battalions, which so increased his army that the Prince, no longer venturing to keep the field, was obliged to throw all his cannon into Quesnoy, when it was taken on the 4th October." Bouchain, the last trophy of Marlborough's victories, opened its gates on the 10th October. The coalition was paralysed; and Louis, who so lately trembled for his capital, found his armies advancing from conquest to conquest, and tearing from the Allies the fruits of all their victories.¹

62.
Conclusion
of the war
between
France
and the
Dutch at
Utrecht.

These disasters, and the evident inability of the Allied armies, without the aid of the English, to keep their ground in Flanders, in a manner compelled the Dutch, however unwilling, to follow the example of Great Britain, in treating separately with France. They became parties, accordingly, to the pacification at Utrecht; and Savoy also concluded peace there. But the barrier for which they had so ardently contended was, by the desertion of England, so much reduced, that it ceased to afford any effectual security against the encroachments of France. That power held the most important fortresses in Flanders which had been conquered by Louis XIV.—Cambray, Valenciennes, and Arras. Lille, the conquest on which Marlborough most prided himself, was restored by the Allies, and with it Bethune, Aire, St Venant, and many other places. The Dutch felt, in the strongest manner, the evil consequences of a treaty which thus, in a manner, left the enemy at their gates; and the irritation consequently produced against England was so violent that it continued through the greater part of the eighteenth century. England, by

her inconceivable defection and base desertion of her allies, lost the confidence of the European powers ; and Austria, in particular, became so alienated that she formed the coalition against England and Prussia without difficulty in 1756. It required all the dangers, sufferings, and glories of the Revolutionary War, to restore England to the place she had attained in general estimation by the victories of Marlborough, or wipe out the disgrace she had incurred by the Treaty of Utrecht.¹

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¹ Coxe, vi. 213, 214, 238. Swift's Works, xvii. 335. Bolingbroke's Correspond. iii. 298.

Austria, indignant at being thus deserted by all her Allies, continued the contest alone through another campaign. But she was overmatched in the struggle ; her resources were exhausted ; and, by the advice of Eugene, conferences were opened at Rastadt, from which, as a just reward for her perfidy, England was excluded. A treaty was soon concluded on the basis of the Treaty of Ryswick. It left Charles the Low Countries, and all the Spanish territories in Italy, except Sicily ; but, with Sardinia, Bavaria was restored. France retained Landau, but restored New Brisach, Fribourg, and Kehl. Thus was that great power left in possession of the whole conquests ceded to Louis XIV. by the treaties of Aix-la-Chapelle, Nimeguen, and Ryswick, with the vast addition of the family alliance with a Bourbon prince possessing Spain and the Indies. A century of repeated wars, on the part of England and the European powers, with France, followed by the dreadful struggle of the Revolutionary contest, and the costly campaigns of Wellington, were the legacy bequeathed to the nation by Bolingbroke and Harley, in arresting the course of Marlborough's victories, and restoring France to a preponderance,² when on the eve of being reduced to a level consistent with the

63.
Austria continues the struggle, and makes peace at Rastadt.

² Mr Pitt to Sir B. Keene, Coxe's House of Bourbon, c. 57. Coxe's Marl. vi. 238.

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1712.

64.
Increased
virulence
of the libels
against
Marlbo-
rough.

independence of other states. Well might Mr Pitt style the Treaty of Utrecht "the indelible reproach of the age;" and bitterly did England suffer for her guilt in concluding such a pacification.

While Marlborough had been vainly endeavouring, by his weight and influence, to save the nation from a peace which should deprive it of the whole fruits of his victories, and leave it exposed to the whole dangers from which he had rescued it, the Government, and the base libellers whom they employed, were leaving nothing undone which would lessen his reputation or add to his chagrin. Every agent of political intrigue was employed, every malignant passion roused, every mercenary scribbler of the press encouraged to throw odium on the fallen general. The only anxiety was, who should traduce him most effectually. His whole previous life was passed in review; his early irregularities at the gay court of Charles II. were ostentatiously brought to light; the scurrilous pen of the author of the *New Atalantis* was rewarded for the propagation of the scandal; and even his subsequent life, so marked by regularity and decorum, was made the subject of invective; and his friendships and intimacies were construed into political intrigues, or stigmatised as crimes. His military conduct even was called in question; doubts were thrown upon the courage of the bravest of the brave. The object of encouraging this extraordinary and almost unparalleled outbreak of the malignant passions was very evident. One crime necessitates another. Ministers having, in order to disarm the mighty hero who might have thwarted or impeded the negotiation for a separate peace, upon which they had staked their existence, dismissed him from all his employments,¹ had no alternative but to justify the

¹ Hist. de Marl. iii. 445-447. Coxe, vi. 219, 220.

act of ingratitude by words of calumny ; and this is the history of the whole persecutions of Marlborough.

Not content with assailing his reputation, and defacing the fair fame of the hero who had raised his country to such a pitch of greatness, the Ministry proceeded to substantial acts of aggression. The first of these was a suit for the recovery of £15,000 a-year, arising from the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on foreign subsidies, which has been already mentioned, and respecting which Marlborough's vindication had been so complete. The manner in which this ungracious and unfounded suit was received in the courts of law, proved that Government was determined to exert all its influence to get his plea in defence overruled, and a judgment in any event secured. The next was the encouragement of actions against the Duke, to the amount of £30,000, for arrears due to the workmen and contractors at Blenheim. The customary payments made by the Treasury to carry on this noble and deserved monument of national gratitude, had, as already noticed, been discontinued since Marlborough had incurred the displeasure of Government by refusing to support the peace ; and four commissioners had been appointed to examine into the accounts. The Lord-Treasurer gave frequent promises to obtain warrants from the Queen for payment of the arrears ; but the thing was never done : and in the course of the year 1711, all that was got was a small sum, barely adequate to covering the unfinished part of the building from the inclemencies of the weather. Marlborough and the Duchess steadily adhered to their wise plan of refusing to pay any part of these accounts, lest they should be held as the employers, and rendered responsible for the whole. The result was, that the contractors, growing desperate,

CHAP.

IX.

1712.

65.

Renewed
persecution
against him
in pecuniary
affairs.

CHAP.

IX.

1712.

¹ Coxe, vi.
219, 220.66.
Marlbo-
rough ob-
tains pass-
ports and
goes abroad,
October 30.

and secretly encouraged by the official commissioners, who were desirous of throwing the claim off the Treasury, raised actions against the Duke for £30,000 ; and these suits, in themselves serious, were rendered the more formidable that they were evidently the precursor to many others of a similar description that might be expected to follow.¹

Disheartened by so many concurring causes of chagrin, Marlborough adopted the resolution of going abroad, and withdrawing altogether from English society at home, till his countrymen should be more disposed to do him justice. With all his great and noble qualities, and his utter indifference to personal danger, he did not possess that lofty sense of rectitude which prompts to repel calumny of language by purity of conduct, and often disarms hostility by the calm indifference with which it is borne. His mind was unduly susceptible ; in that respect it partook more of the feminine than the masculine character. His inability to bear abuse as well as he did grape-shot was the greatest weakness in his character. Yet it arose, as many failings do, from the excess of qualities which were among his greatest excellencies. The very perfection of courtesy, gentleness, and suavity in manner himself, he forgot that these qualities, in an equal degree, were nearly as rare in men as the military genius by which he was distinguished. He applied, through Mr Maynwaring, to the Lord-Treasurer for passports, which that nobleman, much to his credit, at once granted, notwithstanding some opposition on the part of his colleagues in the Cabinet.*

* " I desire you will, with my most humble service, assure *our friend* that there have been endeavours from both sides to obstruct granting the pass desired ; yet I shall have the honour of putting it into his hands. I did not

Before his departure, the Duke vested his estates in the hands of his sons-in-law as trustees, and consigned £50,000 to his faithful friend, Cadogan, to be invested in the Dutch funds, "in order to supply him," says the Duchess, "with *the means of subsistence*, should the Stuart line be restored." Having thus settled his affairs, he set sail from Dover on the 26th November, without any other honour than the voluntary salute of the captain of the vessel.¹

CHAP.
IX.
1712.

¹ Conduct,
315, 316.
Oxford to
Maynwaring,
Oct. 31,
1711. Coxe,
vi. 222-225.

Before Marlborough set out for the Continent, his oldest and most valued friend, the sharer of his labours, the partner of his glory, had departed for that bourne from whence no traveller returns. Godolphin, after a long and painful illness, which he bore with exemplary patience and fortitude, expired at the Duke of St Alban's house, on the 17th October. As he had been the companion of Marlborough in the days of his greatness, so he was the companion of, or rather preceded, his fall. Both had fallen on the days, so well known in this world of intrigue, when

67.
Death and
character of
Godolphin.

"The post of honour is a private station."

Godolphin's talents were solid rather than brilliant; his character respectable rather than commanding. Like Marlborough, he was an early friend of the Stuart family, and continued, after their exile, to do them every kindness in his power; but, unlike him, he did not desert them in their misfortune, for he accompanied the fugitive monarch to the sea-coast. Such was his probity that, though he had been at the head of the Treasury for ten,

think it worth while to trouble you with the obstruction one meets with; for, when I undertook it, I was resolved not to be deterred from finishing it."—*Lord Oxford to Mr Maynwaring*, October 31, 1711; Coxe, vi. 221.

CHAP.

IX.

1712.

¹ Coxe, vi.
391. Hist.
de Marl.
iii. 451, 452.
Conduct,
324.

68.
Moral les-
sons to be
deduced
from Marl-
borough's
fall.

and in office for twenty years, he scarcely left enough to pay his funeral.* His temper, judgment, and equanimity were above all praise, and mainly contributed, during his long and eventful career, to keep together the discordant elements of the Whig ministry. His title and small fortune went to his son Francis, married to Henrietta, eldest daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, from whom the present and sixth Duke of Leeds is descended.¹

An event so important in its consequences, and attended with such momentous results on the subsequent history of Europe and the world, as the fall of so great a man as the Duke of Marlborough, naturally leads even the inconsiderate mind to reflection. Voltaire, who omitted no opportunity of representing human affairs as governed by chance, considers it as having been entirely brought about by a palace intrigue, and has turned a well-known paragraph to the effect that a fit of passion in Mrs Masham, occasioned by the Duchess of Marlborough having accidentally overturned a cup of water on her brocade, had restored the tottering throne of Louis XIV., and changed the face of Europe. Other writers, especially on the Continent, struck by the frightful ingratitude evinced to the hero who had done such inestimable services, both to his sovereign and his country, have concluded that it was the very magnitude of these services which proved his ruin; and that, like Themis-

* "He was very charitable and generous; and though he had lived so long, and had great employments when he died, he had not in the world but about £14,000 in tallie, of which £7000 was mine, £3000 Mr Remden's, £1000 Mrs Curtis', a woman that looked after my two elder children; and many other small sums that he took of helpless people who thought themselves safe in his hands; and when all his debts were paid, there would hardly be enough to bury him."—*Conduct*, 325.

toles, Scipio Africanus, and Belisarius, he affords a memorable example, not merely of the inconstancy and ingratitude, alike of courts and of the people, but of the tendency of irrequitable benefits to nourish no other feelings but those of jealousy and alienation.

Without pretending to deny that it was the very greatness of Marlborough which was the immediate cause of his fall, and fully admitting that, if he had not placed his sovereign on the throne, delivered Europe, and raised his country to an unexampled pitch of glory, he would in all probability have been permitted to enjoy his honours in peace, and to sink into the grave after a tranquil old age—it is yet very apparent that he himself, and the party to which he belonged, were not wholly blameless in the rupture which ensued, and that they had, in a great degree, their own grasping ambition to thank for their fall. The more the secret history of Queen Anne's reign is studied, the more clearly does it appear that this grasping disposition was the original cause which made the Queen jealous of the Whigs, and produced an alienation between her and the Marlborough family. It was this which made them force Sunderland upon her as Secretary of State, and force Harley from her in the same capacity, refuse promotion to Colonel Hill, and strive to effect the removal of Mrs Masham. They required to have everything to themselves; no compromise or division was admissible: the Crown was powerless: a party had become the rulers of the state; a family overshadowed the throne. In Marlborough's case, this lofty pre-eminence, so far as he individually is concerned, cannot be considered as a fault. It arose unavoidably from his greatness. His vast civil and military capacity attracted everything, not only in Eng-

CHAP.

IX.

1712.

69.

The grasping disposition of Marlborough and the Whigs was one chief cause of his fall.

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IX.

1712.

land, but in Europe, around his standards. His camp, like that of Cæsar or Napoleon, contained not only the headquarters of the commander-in-chief, but the cabinet of the statesman—the office of the Foreign Secretary. He was the real head of the Alliance. But the same excuse cannot be made for the grasping ambition and exclusive spirit of his party at home, or the domineering disposition and irritable temper of his Duchess ; and the latter causes sowed the first seeds of division between hearts in the outset as closely united as those of human beings can be in this world.

70.
It was the
previous re-
volts against
the Crown
which oc-
casioned
this distrust
in the Sove-
reign.

But we should widely err if we stopped short here, and ascribed the fall of Marlborough, and change of the face of Europe, to the grasping ambition of the Whigs, as its sole and ultimate cause. The point is, what made them so grasping ? What induced, at that particular time, such an exclusive spirit and insatiable ambition, in the leaders of a party, as rendered them at once irksome to the sovereign and an object of jealousy to the nation ? The cause is very apparent. They had been traitors to their oaths ; they had slain their sovereign ; they had overturned a dynasty. The Great Rebellion, and the Revolution of 1688, had left the seeds of unavoidable dissension between the sovereign and the party which had placed her on the throne. Queen Anne was perpetually haunted by the recollection of the fate of her grandfather, Charles I. She studied his tragic story incessantly, and in secret dreaded the prostration of the Crown, and destruction of herself, from the ascendancy of a party which had done both to her predecessors. The sudden insurrection of the nation against her father, and the entire defection of his supporters, had inspired her with a secret distrust of men

in whom the qualities of fidelity and constancy had proved to be so lamentably deficient. She naturally, therefore, felt herself attracted towards a party whose watchwords were Loyalty and Devotion, and which, in the worst times, in the field or on the scaffold, had shown themselves true to their principles and faithful to their oaths. She was attracted to the Cavaliers as naturally and unavoidably as the friends of freedom were to the cause of Russell and Sidney.

On the other hand, the large share which they had had in these convulsions, and the evident tendency of their principles, if pushed to extremities in troubled times, to reproduce them, was the real reason which rendered the Whigs so tenacious of office, and so inordinately ambitious of all the patronage and influence which could support them in it. They felt a secret conviction that their position was insecure ; they rested on the unstable equilibrium. They knew that there could be little sincere reliance, in the sovereign on the throne, upon a party which had beheaded her grandfather and dethroned her father ; and therefore they felt an insatiable desire to strengthen themselves in office, in such a way as should render them independent of any change in her disposition, and beyond the reach of her suspicions. They were haunted, like the Jacobins of Paris a century after, and from the same reason, by a perpetual dread of a Restoration. Thence their anxiety to secure the patronage of all offices under Government to themselves ; thence their desire, in an especial manner, to have no one round the person of the sovereign but their own devoted adherents ; thence their grasping ambition, their exclusive system, their unpopularity both with the sovereign and the nation, and their fall. The great lesson to be

CHAP.

IX.

1712.

71.
The same
cause pro-
duced the
grasping
ambition of
the Whigs.

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IX.

1712.

learned from the eventful story of Queen Anne's reign, as of all other periods which succeed those of civil convulsion, is, that political crimes draw after them, even in this world, their own punishment ; that the causes which induce that punishment are the very ones which the criminals devise to avert it ; and that, of all public crimes, the greatest and the most irremediable are those which sever the bonds that unite the sovereign and the people.

72.
Errors of
the people
at this
crisis.

But the people themselves were far from being immaculate at this crisis. On the contrary, they largely shared at once in the ingratitude of the Court and the blindness of the Government. They entered not only readily, but cordially and enthusiastically, into the persecution of the illustrious general who had raised their country to such an unparalleled pitch of glory ; they evinced the too frequent, and to human nature degrading, jealousy of little against great minds. Such was the strength of this feeling that it led them to overlook, not only every consideration of prudence and wisdom, but every attention to their own and their children's interests ; to forget alike their principles, their policy, and security ; and generally support, at the close of a war in the prosecution of which they had made the greatest sacrifices, and displayed the noblest spirit, a peace which was characterised by the abandonment of all the objects for which those sacrifices had been made, and all the securities which that spirit had enabled them to attain.

73.
Faults of
the Queen
and the
Tories at
this crisis.

Still greater, because blacker and more unpardonable, was the ingratitude of the Queen on this occasion. Her fault was of a far deeper dye than that either of the Whigs or Tories, for it was mixed up with personal feeling, it was stained by odious ingratitude. Marl-

borough had in every sense been the architect of her fortune. By displacing her father, he had been mainly instrumental in placing her on the throne; he had secured her there by the wisdom of his measures, and illustrated her reign by the glory of his actions. Whatever he had been to others, to her at least he had been a true and faithful servant—a wise and trusty counsellor—a successful and glorious general. Yet she repaid all these inestimable services by the blackest ingratitude, and not only acquiesced, but took the lead, in a series of persecutions of her first and greatest subject, her first and greatest benefactor, which were a disgrace to the age in which she lived, and to the end of the world will be a hissing and a reproach against human nature itself. Her Tory ministers were blameable, not because they strove to supplant Marlborough and the Whigs in power, but because, in the prosecution of that object, they abandoned all the main objects of our foreign policy, relinquished all the fruits of the war, and carried their political hostility beyond all bounds into private malignity and persecution. But in Queen Anne's case, these offences, grave as they are, were mingled with others of a deeper dye; for she was not only unwise and inconsistent as a sovereign, but ungrateful and revengeful as a woman.

It is recorded by Lord Bacon, that when the English garrison of Calais, in the reign of Queen Mary, was evacuating that fortress after its capitulation to the Duke of Guise, a French officer said to an English, "When will your standard be again seen here?" "*When your national sins shall exceed ours,*" was the Englishman's reply. We have seen the accomplishment of this memorable prophecy. The march of Marl-

CHAP.

IX.

1712.

74.
Moral lesson from subsequent events.

CHAP.

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1712.

borough and Eugene to Paris in 1711 was interrupted, and a disgraceful peace concluded, in consequence of divisions and heartburnings—the sad bequest of two successful revolutions in Great Britain; and repeatedly, during the eighteenth century, England was brought to the verge of ruin in consequence. But time rolled on, and brought its wonted changes on its wings. England, under the Hanoverian dynasty, which Marlborough seated on the throne, enjoyed during a century the inestimable blessings of civil and religious freedom, *combined* with devotion and loyalty to the throne. The national feeling was composed of all the generous aspirations which actuated the Whigs of the preceding century, and all the noble devotion which sustained the Tories. Meanwhile, France, during the same period, was distracted by the passions, and at last torn by the convulsions, which had desolated England a century before; and what was the result? Such, and such only, as under the administration of a righteous Providence might be expected. The march of Eugene and Marlborough, suspended for a century, was renewed; victory was in the end faithful to the standards of freedom and loyalty, of patriotism and perseverance; the national sins of France had exceeded those of England, and the anticipated result took place: the gates of Calais were entered by the English horse, which had traversed France from Bayonne; and the standards of Wellington and Blucher were seen on the towers of Paris.

CHAPTER X.

MARLBOROUGH'S BRILLIANT RECEPTION ON THE CONTINENT.—LOSES THE PRINCIPALITY OF MINDELSHEIM.—HIS MEASURES TO SECURE THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION.—COUNTER-MEASURES OF BOLINGBROKE TO RESTORE THE STUARTS.—DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE, AND ACCESSION OF GEORGE I.—MARLBOROUGH IS APPOINTED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.—HIS WISE MEASURES DEFEAT THE REBELLION IN 1715.—IS STRUCK WITH APOPLEXY, AND RETIRES FROM PUBLIC LIFE.—HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER.—PUBLIC FUNERAL, AND HONOURS PAID TO HIS MEMORY.

LIKE all other great contests which have desolated the world, the War of the Succession, although ostensibly waged on account of the Spanish succession, was really the result of opposite and contending principles which divided mankind. Civil and religious liberty was the cause for which Marlborough contended, and its success was wound up with the Hanoverian succession. Civil despotism was the principle which animated the armies of Louis ; the establishment of the Romish faith would have followed their triumph, and the restoration of the Stuart line was its symbol. The Elector of Hanover was found with the one host, the Pretender was conspicuous in the ranks of the other. The malice of his enemies, and the factious spirit which had come to animate the British counsels, had deprived Marlborough of the means of securing the independence of his country by the conditions of the treaty of peace, and at the same time

CHAP.

X.

1713.

1.
Marlbo-
rough's im-
portant
share in se-
curing the
Hanoverian
succession.

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X.

1713.

demonstrated in the clearest manner the force of his genius, by the disasters which had befallen the Alliance since he had been removed from its direction. But Providence, even during the few remaining years allotted to his earthly career, had reserved for him another triumph, which involved within itself the dearest objects for which he had contended in the field. As the life of Queen Anne drew towards a close, the efforts of the opposite parties to secure the Hanoverian and Stuart succession respectively became more animated; and they were so nearly balanced that it was hard to say to which side success would incline. But in this crisis the influence and counsels of Marlborough interposed with decisive effect in favour of the Hanoverian family; and to his wisdom and patriotism we are mainly indebted for the establishment of a family on the throne, whose title to it is founded on the assertion of the great principles of civil and religious freedom.

2.
Marlborough is
received with the
highest
honours on
the Continent, Nov.
24, 1713.

If Marlborough had experienced in his own country the usual envy of little at great minds, and the well-known and oft-experienced ingratitude of sovereigns and their subjects for inappreciable services, he was in some degree indemnified by his reception on the Continent. On landing at Brille, on the 24th November, he was received with such demonstrations of gratitude and respect as showed how deeply his public services had sunk into the hearts of men, and how warmly they appreciated his efforts to avert from England and the coalition the evils likely to flow from the Treaty of Utrecht. He departed on the following morning under a triple discharge of artillery, and was received at Antwerp, outside the walls, by the governor, the Marquis of Terracina, who paid him every respect in his power.

Unanimous acclamations burst from the multitude, as the great general, who had delivered them from the yoke of France, passed through the streets. At Maestricht he was welcomed with the honours usually reserved for sovereign princes; and although he did his utmost, on the journey to Aix-la-Chapelle, to avoid attracting the public attention, and to slip unobserved through by-ways, yet the eagerness of the public, or the gratitude of his old soldiers, discovered him wherever he went. Wherever he passed, crowds of all ranks were waiting to see him, were it only to get a glimpse of the hero who had saved the Empire, and filled the world with his renown. All were struck with his noble air and demeanour, softened, though not weakened, by the approach of age. They declared that his appearance was not less overpowering than his sword. Many burst into tears when they recollected what he had been, and what he was, and how unaccountably the great nation to which he belonged had fallen from the height of glory to such degradation. Yet was the manner of Marlborough so courteous and yet animated, his conversation so simple and yet cheerful, that it was commonly said at the time, "that the only things he had forgotten were his own deeds, and the only things he remembered were the misfortunes of others." Crowds of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, hastened to attend his levee at Aix-la-Chapelle on the 17th January 1714; and the Duke de Ledeguires, on leaving it, said, with equal justice and felicity, "I can now say that I have seen the man who is equal to the Maréchal de Turenne in conduct, to the Prince of Condé in courage, and superior to the Maréchal de Luxembourg in success."¹

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
460, 461.
Life of
Marlbo-
rough, 175.
Coxe, vi.
225-227.

But if the veteran hero found some compensation,

CHAP.
X.

1714.

3.

Base ingratitude of the imperial court to him.

in the unanimous admiration of foreign nations, for the ingratitude with which he had been treated by the Government of his own, he was soon destined to find that substantial gratitude for past services was not to be looked for among foreign potentates any more than his own countrymen. Upon the restoration of the Elector of Bavaria, by the Treaty of Rastadt, the principality of Mindelsheim, which had been bestowed upon him after the battle of Blenheim by the Emperor Joseph, and was situated in that Electorate, was resumed by the Elector. No stipulation in his favour was made either by the British government or the Imperial court, and therefore the estate, which yielded a clear revenue of £2000 a-year, was lost to Marlborough. He transmitted, through Prince Eugene, a memorial to the Emperor, claiming an indemnity for his loss; but though it was earnestly supported by that generous prince, yet, being unaided by any efforts on the part of the English ministry, it was allowed to fall asleep.* An indemnity was often promised, even by the Emperor in writing;† but performance of the promise was always evaded.¹ The duke was made a prince of the Holy

¹ Coxe, vi. 248, 249. Hist. de Marl. iii.

* "As soon as I received your Highness's letter, I did not fail to give the memorial to his Imperial and Catholic Majesty, who ordered me to assure you that he will never forget the great services you have rendered him and his family, and that he will contrive that your Highness shall keep your estate; and in case the restitution of Mindelsheim takes place, will indemnify you. You may be assured I shall omit nothing that may be serviceable to you. Of this, the friendship that has always existed between us may convince you."—*Prince Eugene to Duke of Marlborough*, Vienna, May 25, 1714; COXE, vi. 248.

† At the future congress, his Imperial Majesty will do all that is possible to sustain my Lord Duke in the principality of Mindelsheim; but if it should so happen that any invincible difficulty should occur in that affair, his Imperial Highness will give his Highness an equivalent out of his own hereditary dominions."—*Emperor Charles VI. to Duchess of Marlborough*, August 8, 1714; COXE, vi. 248.

Roman Empire, but obtained nothing but empty honours for his services ; and at this moment these high-sounding titles are all that remain in the Marlborough family to testify the gratitude of the Cæsars to the hero who saved their imperial and royal thrones.

CHAP.
X.
1714.

The same oblivion of past and invaluable services, when they were no longer required, pursued the illustrious general in his declining years, on the part of his own countrymen. The got-up stories about embezzlement, and dilapidation of the public money in Flanders, were allowed to go to sleep when they had answered their destined purpose of bringing about his fall from political power. No grounds were found for a prosecution, or which could afford a chance of success, even in the swamped and now subservient House of Peers. But everything that malice could suggest, or party bitterness effect, was employed to fill the last days of the immortal hero with anxiety and disquiet. Additional charges were brought against him by the commissioners, founded on the allegation that he had drawn a pistole per troop, and ten shillings a company, for mustering the soldiers, though in the foreign auxiliaries it was often not done. Marlborough at once transmitted a refutation of those fresh charges, so clear and decisive that it entirely silenced those accusations.¹ * But his

4.
Continued
malice
against him
at home.

¹ Duke of
Marlbo-
rough's
Answer,
June 2,
1713. Coxe,
vi. 231.
Parl. Hist.
vi. 1182.

* " MY LORD,—I was extremely surprised to find myself charged with mismanagement of the public money, in the report of the commissioners of accounts, on pretence of the subject-troops having been mustered complete during the war, and the foreigners not being mustered at all. It is easy to misrepresent the best things, and give the greatest falsehoods an air of truth, by suppressing of circumstances ; by relating facts by halves ; by reporting only parts of answers ; by confounding of times, and drawing conclusions from inuendos and suppositions, which I shall demonstrate to be the manner I am treated on this occasion. I am charged, first, with the want of authority for passing the troops complete ; and it is insinuated, in the next

CHAP.

X.

1714.

5.
Suspension
of the build-
ing of Blen-
heim at the
public ex-
pense.

enemies, though driven from this ground, still persecuted him with unrelenting malice. The noble pile of Blenheim, standing, as it did, an enduring monument at once of the Duke's services, and the nation's gratitude, was a grievous eyesore to the dominant majority in England, and they did all in their power to prevent its completion.

Orders were first given to the Treasury, on June 1, 1712, to suspend any further payments from the royal exchequer; and commissioners were appointed to investigate the claims of the creditors and expense of the work. They recommended the advance of a third to each claimant, which was accordingly made; but as many years elapsed, and no further payments to account were made, the principal creditors brought an action in the Court of Exchequer against the Duke, as personally liable for the amount, and the court pronounced decree in favour of the plaintiffs, which was affirmed, after a long litigation, in the House of Lords. Meanwhile the building itself, for want of any pay-

place, that the doing it was a detriment and prejudice to the public. As to the want of authority, this objection is, in fact, false; for the late high treasurer, Lord Godolphin, and myself, were empowered by Parliament to take off respites, to pass musters complete, and to act as we should find most for her Majesty's service in those matters; as appears by a clause in an act of Parliament, passed in the year 1702, or 1703, of which Mr Cardonel can give an exact and particular account: and I appeal to the testimony of my Lord Bolingbroke, who was then Secretary of War, for a confirmation of what I allege in this affair. As to the pretending it has increased the public expense, the contrary is so manifestly known, that, had the commissioners examined any one officer of the army on that point, or taken the trouble to compute how little the non-effective money amounted to, and how much the recruits cost, it would have appeared as plain as a mathematical demonstration that very great sums had been saved to the public by this way of recruiting. I am certain no officer will refuse to attest, on oath, that this fund was seldom or ever sufficient to complete their companies; and I appeal to all those who sit in the House, whether my obliging the captains to recruit out of the non-effective money was not complained of as a hardship on them, since they

master, was at a stand ; and this noble pile, this proud monument of a nation's gratitude, would have remained a modern ruin to this day, had it not been completed from the private funds of the hero whose services it was intended to commemorate. But the Duke of Marlborough, as well as the Duchess, were too much interested in the work to allow it to remain unfinished. He left by his will fifty thousand pounds to complete the building, which was still in a very unfinished state at the time of his death, and the duty was faithfully performed by the Duchess after his decease. From the accounts of the total expense, preserved at Blenheim, it appears that, out of three hundred thousand pounds which the whole edifice cost, no less than sixty thousand pounds was provided from the private funds of the Duke of Marlborough.¹

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Coxe, vi.
369-372.

The removal of Marlborough from power and command, and his departure for the Continent, did not appease, but rather tended to increase, the dissensions at

were very often forced to apply part of their personal pay to complete their companies ; for which reason, frequent applications were made to me, by all the general officers of the foot, to obtain some consideration for the captains on account of this extraordinary expense. I, however, always withstood it, to prevent increasing the charge of the army in Flanders, which would have been the unavoidable consequence of giving anything like recruit-money by Parliament. That the public has gained very considerably by the method I put this matter in, is a truth not only proved by facts, and witnessed by all the officers in the army, but of a nature that it carries self-evidence along with it ; for, upon reckoning the recruits to cost four or five pounds a-man, and the vacancy from whence that sum is to arise, at sixpence a-day, and considering the regiments came complete into the field, and that several of the men died, and were killed at the latter end of the campaign, it will appear that the fund of non-effective money was not sufficient for the recruiting, and the captains, consequently, under a necessity of supplying what was wanting out of their personal pay ; for a particular state of which I refer to any one colonel it may be thought fit to examine."—COXE, vol. vi. p. 231-2-3

CHAP.
X.

1714.

6.

Dissension
between
Lady Ma-
sham and
the Duchess
of Somerset.

Queen Anne's court, and in her cabinet. Success brought its usual and attendant divisions to the victorious party. Mrs Masham and the Duchess of Somerset were the heads of the contending coteries in the former; Oxford and Bolingbroke of the opposite parties in the latter. Mrs (who had lately been created Lady) Masham was the principal agent on behalf of the exiled family, and was the channel by which continual representations were made to the Queen from the courts of Versailles and St Germain. She worked not without success on the family affections of the sovereign, her natural preference of her own line over that of the Hanover family—to whom the succession opened by Act of Parliament—and her now openly-avowed adoption of Tory principles in government. On the other hand, the Duchess of Somerset, who might be called the head of the Tory Protestant party at court, worked not less assiduously in magnifying the dangers to the Reformed faith, and the risk of fresh convulsions, not only if the exiled family were restored, but if any decisive steps were taken towards their restoration. The Queen, who was now advanced in years, and declining in health, long floated in a state of uncertainty between these contending parties—her secret partialities impelling her one way, her reason and judgment inclining another; and to the mental anxiety which this conflict produced, her death at no distant period is in a great degree to be ascribed.¹

¹ Coxe, vi.
253, 254.
Conduct,
319, 320.

7.
And of Ox-
ford and
Boling-
broke in
the cabinet.

The cabinet, as is usual in such cases, contained within itself the heads of the rival parties whose opposite opinions distracted the royal breast and divided the nation. Harley, now Earl of Oxford, was the head of the one; St John, now Viscount Bolingbroke, the

chief of the other. Oxford was prime-minister, and enjoyed the chief confidence of the sovereign ; and he was sincerely attached to the Protestant succession, although in the struggle for power, and to secure a majority in Parliament for the separate peace, he had not scrupled to pay court to the Jacobites in Great Britain, and even to enter for a time into the views of the court of St Germain. He was honest in intention, and comparatively pure in morals ; but ambitious, unscrupulous in the scramble for power, subtle, and gifted with extraordinary powers of dissimulation. While his public measures seemed to favour the interests of the Tories, he was indefatigable in his efforts to court the Whigs, and support the Elector of Hanover, whom he regarded as the real and constitutional heir to the throne. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, brilliant in conversation, powerful in eloquence, fascinating in manner, but dissipated in morals and reckless in conduct, was rapidly gaining ground, though in the subordinate situation of Foreign Secretary, on the astute Premier, both by his great abilities, and by the entire coincidence of his feelings and principles with the confirmed partialities of the sovereign. He was devoted heart and soul to the cause of the exiled family, and looked confidently forward to their restoration. He was intrusted with the secret designs of the court of St Germain, and was daily rendering their party in Great Britain more formidable by his frank conciliating manners, and the undisguised preference evinced for him by his royal mistress.¹

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¹ Coxe, vi.
253, 254.

The new Parliament, as is usual on the eve of a political crisis or civil convulsion, exhibited a strange confusion of parties, and rendered it difficult to say to which side, if an emergency arose, the majority would incline.

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8.

strange
mixture of
parties in
the Houses
of Parlia-
ment.

The Tories had a considerable majority—not less, if they were united, than a third of the whole House ; but they were split into two sections—those who favoured, and those who opposed, the Hanoverian succession ; and this division would, of course, range them on opposite sides on the demise of the reigning sovereign. The Scotch Jacobites, both in the Lords and Commons, would, of course, unite with the latter of these section ; and they were of importance, from their courage, their fidelity, and their command of the warlike mountaineers of Caledonia. The Whigs were consistent and united, and the steady friends of the Hanoverian succession ; but they were out of power—were in a minority, since the last election and creation of Peers, in both Houses—and in a still smaller minority of the whole empire. In these circumstances, it was difficult to say to which party, on the question of the succession opening, victory would incline. Bolingbroke sketched the real state of parties with his usual graphic felicity, in these words,—“ In both Houses there are the best dispositions I ever saw ; but I am sorry to tell you their plans are unimproved : the Whigs pursue their plan in good order, and in concert. The Tories stand at gaze, expect the Court to lead them on, and the Court seems in a lethargy. The minority, and that minority unpopular, must get the better of the majority, who have the sense of the nation on their side. All that can be done is doing to prevail on our friend, the Lord-Treasurer, to alter his measures ; to renew a confidence with the Tories, and a spirit in them ; and to give a regular motion to all the wheels of government. I am sanguine enough to hope that we shall prevail. You shall hear from me again the moment I see *through the present confused workings of Court and Party.*”¹

¹ Bolingbroke to Lord Strafford, Correspond. ii. 494. Lockhart, ii. 478.

This strange and unsatisfactory state of parties was strongly evinced in the measures of Parliament during the session of 1714. At one time the Commons passed, by a majority of seventy-six to sixty-four, a resolution, that the Protestant succession was not in danger ; immediately after, they gave the most decisive proof of their sense of the reality of the danger, by carrying in the Peers an address to the Queen, praying her to renew her application for the removal of the Pretender from Lorraine, and to issue a proclamation, offering a reward of £5000 for apprehending and bringing to justice the same Prince, if he should land in Great Britain. Meanwhile the Queen was silently, but most effectively, taking measures for the succession of her brother to the throne of England. The Jacobite clubs increased in number and boldness, even in the metropolis, at which the Pretender's health was openly proposed, without any notice being taken of the proceedings ; the army was gradually remodelled, and colonels appointed to regiments, and governors to commands, notoriously in the Jacobite interest. The ferment in the public mind was rapidly increasing, when it was brought to a perfect climax by the Electoral Prince of Hanover, who had been created Duke of Cambridge, applying, by advice of the Whigs, for a writ summoning him to attend and take his place in Parliament, accompanied by the still more ominous declaration that he might be expected in England in person before the writ was issued. The Queen was violently agitated, and the Jacobite party thrown into consternation, by this unexpected motion ; but as there was no pretext, far less a legal ground, on which it could be refused, it was at length reluctantly conceded ;¹ and Baron Schutz, the Hanoverian mini-

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9.

Contradictory measures of the Legislature in contemplation of a rupture.

¹ Parl. Hist. vi. 1335-1338. Coxe, vi. 259-261.

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X.

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10.

Marlbo-
rough's con-
duct at this
crisis.

ster, set out with the important writ for the court of Hanover.

During these momentous crises, fraught with the future fate and destiny of Great Britain, Marlborough remained at Antwerp, corresponding actively with his friends both at home and abroad, and doing everything in his power to secure the Protestant succession and ascent of the Hanoverian family to the throne. He was perfectly firm to his principles, and acted throughout an open, resolute, and consistent part. Convinced that a counter-revolution was threatening at home, he sent General Cadogan to make the requisite arrangements with General Stanhope, and the other leaders of the Hanoverian party, to take measures, when the succession opened, for transporting troops from Dunkirk, which was still in the hands of the British, to London, and offered to put himself at their head. He wrote to the Elector of Hanover, offering to put £20,000 at his disposal, to secure his accession to the throne. So gratified were the Hanoverian family by these proofs of his fidelity, that the Electress Sophia, the next in the succession, intrusted him with a blank warrant, appointing him commander-in-chief of her whole troops and garrisons on her accession to the crown.¹ *

¹ Marlbo-
rough to
Robithon,
Nov. 30,
1713. Mac-
pherson, ii.
173. Coxe,
vi. 262-264.

* "Ministers have affected to write to such princes not to receive the Pretender, into whose countries they are sure he will never come, and taken no step in earnest towards removing him out of Lorraine, notwithstanding the address of both Houses, and that his being there or in France is the same thing. To this must be added, the giving all employments, civil and military, to notorious Jacobites; the putting the governments of Scotland and Ireland into the hands of two persons who are known to be friends of the Pretender, (Earl of Mar and Sir Constantine Phipps;) the choosing sixteen lords to serve for Scotland, of whom two were with the Pretender last summer, and most of the rest declared Jacobites; the ministers receiving with such distinction Sir P. Lawless, and, under the pretence of his transacting the business of

The measures now openly taken by the cabinet of London to secure the restoration of the Stuart line, and destroy the Hanoverian succession, excited a very serious disquietude at the courts both of Hanover and the Hague. Oxford, aware of this growing feeling, and alarmed at its probable effects, despatched a relative of his own, Mr Harley, to Hanover, to counteract its effects. No sooner was he informed of this step than Marlborough sent Mr Molyneux, an Irish gentleman of fortune in the Whig interest, to the Electoral court to watch over his proceedings, and in his own correspondence did his utmost to make that court sensible of the danger which impended over them.* So entirely successful was this mission that Mr Molyneux, in ten days after his arrival,¹ was able to inform the Duke of Marlborough "of the perfect regard and affection which this

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11.

Mission of
Mr Harley
to the court
of Hanover,
March 1714.¹ Mr Molyneux to Marlborough, May 18, 1714. Coxe, vi. 276.

Spain, admitting him into their confidence and privacy, though an Irish Papist, and avowed agent of the Pretender; the violence and force used in the elections of members for the city of London, the invading the freedom of election all over the kingdom by corruption, oppression, and bribery, in order to get such persons chosen as are in the interest of the Pretender; and the animating the clergy to preach up hereditary and testamentary right, both which principles are destructive to the succession."—*Marlborough to Robethon*, November 30, 1713; *Hanover Papers*, 1713.

* "It is so evident that the Queen's ministers are determined to place the Pretender on the throne, that it would be losing one's time to produce proofs of it. Their greatest desire and their only view, in Mr Harley's embassy, is to obtain some declaration from the Elector which may impose upon the nation, and make it believe your court is satisfied with them. If you fall into this snare, it will render all the efforts of your friends of no avail; but we rely on the great prudence of His Electoral Highness. In my humble opinion, it would be proper to use despatch, and that the Prince should set out before Lord Paget, Mr Harley's successor, arrives. This journey of the Prince, attended with the success which there is reason to expect from it, cannot fail to give the Elector new influence over all Europe, as he will secure to himself the crown of Great Britain, which will attach the Emperor, Holland, and the court of Prussia, and render him the arbiter of the north of Europe."—*Marlborough to Robethon*, May 5, 1714; Coxe, vi. 269, 270.

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1714.

12.
Indecision
of the court
of Hanover,
and death
of the Elec-
tress Sophia.

court preserves for both your merits, which on a thousand occasions I have had the pleasure to perceive, as well in the Electoral Princess and of the whole court."

The object of Mr Harley's journey to Hanover was to obtain a written declaration from that court that they were satisfied with the ministry, and had a good understanding with the Queen of England. He failed, however, in obtaining any such declaration; and, instead, got only an answer, bearing "that they thought it would be mutually good for both their interests that some one of this house should have the honour to pay his court to the Queen of England"—the very thing which the English Government most wished to avoid. This was the only step, however, which the court of Hanover could be prevailed on to take to support the pretensions of the Elector; and the Prince did not set out even after Baron Schutz had arrived with the writ, summoning him to attend his duty in the English Parliament. They felt the usual indecision of weak and ordinary minds at the approach of a crisis which required a vigorous and decisive step to be taken. Vehement and animated debates were held in the Council of State at Hanover, on the course to be adopted, but they terminated in nothing but indecision; and so gloomy did the prospect appear that Mr Molyneux wrote to Marlborough that "the Prince would not go over, and the succession meets with more difficulties at Hanover than it does in London." So violent was the crisis, and so painful the state of suspense to those principally concerned, that it proved fatal to the aged Electress, who died on the 8th June, at the age of eighty-four, of an affection of the heart, universally regretted.¹

¹ Mr Molyneux to Marlborough, June 9, 1714. Coxe, vi. 282, 283.

The death of the Electress considerably diminished

the difficulties of the Elector, and left him, comparatively speaking, unfettered to pursue his own line of conduct. Directed by Marlborough's counsels, it was prudent and judicious in the highest degree. Still placing his entire confidence and chief reliance on the great general and the Whigs, he was yet careful to avoid a rupture with the Tory Ministry, and to do nothing openly which might irritate the Queen, or strengthen the adverse party in England. Upon this principle he refused to allow his son, the hereditary Prince, to go over to take his seat in the English House of Peers, and declined spending any money, or entering into any cabals, to strengthen his interest in Great Britain. Judging wisely that he had better appear to be invited to take the crown than openly to grasp it, he assumed the air of being indifferent to the succession, and left the management of his interests entirely to his supporters and adherents in England. Oxford, to foment a jealousy between him and Marlborough, did not fail to make him acquainted with the whole particulars of the connection, in former days, of the latter with the Stuarts. But the Elector had sense enough to perceive that these days were past; that Marlborough's line was now irrevocably taken in favour of the Hanoverian succession; and he continued to repose in him the same implicit confidence he had hitherto done.¹

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13.
Prudent
conduct of
the Elector
at this crisis.

¹ Coxe, vi.
283-286.

Events, however, succeeded each other with a rapidity which was not contemplated either by the court of Hanover or their adherents in this country. Oxford, who had climbed to the dizzy heights of power by his consummate art, and by successively paying court to the leaders of the most opposite parties, had lost his influence from the same cause. Duplicity can only prevail

14.
Dismissal of
Oxford, and
Boling-
broke in-
trusted with
the forma-
tion of a
ministry.

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for a season ; truth and sincerity alone succeed in the end. Oxford had alienated Lady Masham by his opposition to the grant of a pension, and other emoluments which she was anxious to obtain ; and Bolingbroke, by declining to engage with him in measures for the restoration of the exiled family. By his duplicity, and a secret correspondence carried on though the medium of Torcy and Gualtier, he had long blinded the court of St Germain ; but as the decisive moment approached, and it became necessary, from the Queen's rapidly declining health, to take measures to secure a restoration, the exiled family became convinced that he was insincere, and that their whole reliance should be placed on Bolingbroke.* They therefore, through the medium of Berwick and De Torcy, made such vigorous representations to Queen Anne on the absolute necessity of removing Oxford that she at last consented to dismiss him. This was not done, however, without many misgivings and a severe mental contest in the breast of the sovereign, which was not diminished by a most violent and indecorous scene that took place, on the occasion of his receiving his *congé*, between him and Bolingbroke, which was prolonged till two in the morning.¹ On this occasion, Oxford said he should leave some people as low as he had found them ; and

¹ Berwick's
Mem. 222-
225—edit.
Petitot.
Coxe, vi.
287, 288.

* "Oxford nous amusait, et il était difficile d'y remédier ; car de rompre avec lui, c'auroit été détruire tout, vu qu'il avait le pouvoir en main, et gouvernait absolument la Reine Anne. Il fallut donc feindre de se fier à lui ; mais nous ne laissions pas de travailler sous main avec le Duc d'Ormond, et nombre d'autres, afin de venir à bout de cette affaire par leur moyen, si Oxford nous manquait. Enfin, voyant le temps s'écouler sans qu'il parut aucun plan de la part d'Oxford, et d'ailleurs apprenant que la santé de la Reine Anne devenait de jour en jour plus mauvaise, je soupçonnais plus que jamais que le Trésorier nous trompait, d'autant plus que je savais qu'il avait écrit à l'Electeur d'Hanover, et qu'il venait d'envoyer à cette cour son cousin Harley. Je m'ouvrais donc à M. De Torcy, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères,

the agitation of the Queen was so excessive that it tended to accelerate her death.

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From this moment Bolingbroke, though not yet officially installed in the office of premier, was regarded with reason as the real head of the administration ; and if the Queen had survived for any considerable time, it is probable that he would have succeeded in the great object of his life—the restoration of the Stuart family. The Tories were in the highest spirits on his elevation, and confidently anticipated from it the speedy seating of the exiled family on the throne. Though he at first was courteous towards the Whigs, and assured Walpole, Stanhope, and the other leaders of that party, at a dinner given to them on the following day, of his desire to secure the Hanoverian succession, he yet declared that he did not venture to propose to the Queen to remove her brother from Lorraine, where he was on the verge of France anxiously awaiting the turn of events. In two days Bolingbroke had nearly the whole cabinet filled up with decided Jacobites. Lord Harcourt was to be Lord-Chancellor ; the Duke of Ormond, Commander-in-chief ; the Duke of Buckingham, President of the Council ; the Earl of Strafford, First Lord of the Admiralty;¹ the Earl of Mar, Secretary of State for Scot-

1714.

15.

Bolingbroke tries to form a ministry ; and his measures to bring in James.

¹ Walpole's Mem. c. viii. Coxe, vi. 287, 289.

et par qui passait tout mon commerce avec Gautier et avec Oxford. Il tomba d'accord avec moi que la conduite du Trésorier était fort extraordinaire, et nous résolûmes de lui écrire, pour lui représenter que la Reine Anne pouvait manquer à toute heure, et qu'ainsi il était nécessaire qu'il nous fit savoir les mesures qu'il avait prises, en ce cas, pour les intérêts du Roi Jacques, aussi bien que les démarches que ce Prince devoit faire. La réponse fut, que si la Reine venait à mourir, les affaires du Roi Jacques, et les leurs, étoient perdues sans ressource. Convaincus de ce que nous leurs mandions continuellement, ils s'évertuèrent, et par le moyen de Madame Masham ils déterminèrent la Reine à renvoyer le Trésorier, n'étant pas possible de conduire l'affaire à bien, tant qu'il seroit en place."—BERWICK'S *Mem.* 223-225—edit. Petitot.

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16.
Counter-
measures of
the Whigs;
and death
of the
Queen.

land ; Bolingbroke, Secretary of Foreign Affairs ; the Treasury in Commission, with Sir W. Wyndham at its head. No doubt could remain, from the composition of this projected cabinet, that, if it had remained any time in power, the Stuarts would have been seated on the throne.

But the hand of fate was on the curtain, and the angel of death defeated the whole objects for which the Queen's ministers had laboured so assiduously, and for which they had sacrificed the security and glory of their country. The Whigs were on the alert, and were actively engaged in measures for securing the arsenals, the Tower, and seaports, and bringing troops to the metropolis. Everything presaged a serious contest, if not a civil war, and the agitation of the public mind became extreme. At this awful moment a committee of the Privy Council met at Kensington, and the Duke of Shrewsbury, throwing off his habitual indecision, acted with the vigour which so often, in a decisive crisis, is attended with success. While they were in the middle of their conference, the Dukes of Argyll and Somerset suddenly entered the room, and announced that the Queen was at the point of death. This being confirmed by a report of the physicians, the committee hastily passed a resolution, that the office of Lord-Treasurer should be instantly filled up, and that the *Duke of Shrewsbury* should be recommended to the Queen. Bolingbroke and his party were thunderstruck by this proposal, and turned deadly pale ; but as the majority was against them, they offered no opposition, probably hoping the Queen would not act on the suggestion. A deputation of the Council waited on the Queen, and stated the recommendation of the whole body. She

faintly approved the choice, delivered the staff to Shrewsbury, and bade him "use it for the good of her people." These were her last words ; she soon after sank into a lethargy, and expired at seven on the morning of the 1st August.¹

Then appeared, in the clearest manner, the vital influence of decision in civil conflicts, and the vast importance of the advantage which the Whigs had gained by the appointment of Shrewsbury as Lord-Treasurer. Lord Somers instantly repaired to Kensington, and he was followed by the leading privy-councillors of his own party. Shrewsbury assumed all the functions of government. Troops were ordered to march from all quarters to London ; ten battalions were recalled from Dunkirk ; an embargo was laid on all the seaports ; a strong fleet sent to sea, under Admiral the Earl of Berkley, to cruise in the Downs ; and a despatch sent to Hanover, urging the Elector to lose no time in coming to England through Holland, where a fleet would be ready to receive him. George I. was immediately proclaimed in the metropolis and principal cities of the kingdom ; and thus were the inestimable blessings of the Protestant succession and political freedom secured to this country, without the shedding of a drop of blood.²

This happy event made an immediate and most auspicious change in the fortunes of Marlborough. The Jacobites, who regarded him with justice as the most formidable of their enemies, were struck with consternation when they heard he was coming over to England.* He had been on terms of tolerable civility with Oxford,

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¹ Coxe, vi.
289-292.

17.

Instantaneous measures of the Whigs to secure the succession, August 1.

² Bolingbroke's Correspond. iv. 321-341. Boyer's Queen Anne, 179. Coxe, vi. 290-292.

18.

Marlborough lands at Dover, and arrives in London, August 4.

* "M. de Torcy has very severe, and, I fear, very exact accounts of us. We are all frightened out of our wits upon the Duke of Marlborough going to England."—*Mr Price to Bolingbroke*, Aug. 7, 1714; *BOLINGBROKE'S Correspond.* iv. 579.

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who had procured for him his passports, and also a grant of ten thousand pounds for the carrying on of Blenheim; but with Bolingbroke he was on no terms whatever. Foreseeing the crisis which was approaching, he left Antwerp and came to Ostend, where he was detained several days by an adverse wind; and was still there on the 1st August, when he received intelligence of the Queen's death. He then embarked, and was received at Dover by an immense crowd, who hailed him with acclamations; and proceeding to London, he was met by Sir Charles Cox, member for Southwark, at the head of two hundred gentlemen, who escorted him into the city amidst the shouts of an immense concourse of citizens. These, with a volunteer company of the Guards who accompanied him, never ceased exclaiming, "Long live George I.—Long live the Duke of Marlborough!" On the following morning he was sworn into the Privy Council, and visited by the foreign ministers and most of the nobility and gentry in and around the metropolis; and in the evening he appeared in the House of Lords, and took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. The Grenadier Guards, his old companions-in-arms, voluntarily fired a *feu-de-joie* on the occasion. One day effaced the traces of years of injustice: the death of a single individual had restored the patriotic hero to the situation in which he stood after the battle of Blenheim.¹

¹ Tindal, xviii. 311.
Ledyard, iii. 387.
Coxe, vi. 305-307.

19.
Marlborough resolves to hold no political situation under the new government.

Marlborough, however, had had too much experience of the ingratitude of courts and the vacillation of the people to be led away by these flattering appearances. He resolved, therefore, most wisely, to give no more hostages to fortune, but to retire from public life. In this determination he was cordially supported by the Duchess, who gives the following account of their con-

versation on the subject : "I begged of the Duke of Marlborough on my knees that he would never accept of any employment. I said that everybody that liked the Revolution and the security of the law had a great esteem for him ; that he had a greater fortune than he wanted ; and that a man who had had such success, with such an estate, would be of more use to any court than they could be of to him. That I would live civilly with them if they were so to me, but would never put it in the power of any king to use me ill. He was entirely of this opinion, and determined to quit all, and serve them only when he could act honestly, and do his country service at the same time. Any extraordinary pay as general he had quitted at first, there being an end of the war, so that he had only an empty name of it ; and his other preferments were Master of the Ordnance and his regiment of the Guards, for which he had only the settled allowances." ¹

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The first step of George I. after his accession was to intrust the formation of a new administration to Lord Townsend, who selected one composed, of course, entirely of Whigs. Lord Cowper, who had so honourably withstood the late queen's entreaties to him to retain the Great Seal when Oxford's administration was formed, was reappointed Lord-Chancellor ; General Stanhope was Secretary of State for the war ; Mr Walpole received the Home Office, and leadership of the House of Commons ; Lord Wharton became Privy Seal, with a marquisate ; the Duke of Somerset, Master of the Horse ; the Duke of Shrewsbury, Lord-Chamberlain ; the Duke of Devonshire, Lord High Steward ; Lord Orford was put at the head of the Admiralty, Lord Halifax of the Treasury ; Lord Sunderland was made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland ;

¹ Conduct,
337. Coxe,
vi. 308.

20.
George I.
forms a
Whig ad-
ministra-
tion, and
arrives in
England,
Aug. 17.

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Lord Godolphin, Cofferer of the Household ; the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord-Chamberlain of the Prince of Wales ; while Marlborough's fourth son-in-law, the Duke of Montague, received a regiment, and his Duchess was made Lady of the Bed-Chamber to the Princess of Wales. Marlborough himself so far yielded to the solicitations of his friends as to resume his former offices of Commander-in-Chief and Master-General of the Ordnance ; but he was not a member of the cabinet, and had little share in political government. He was received by the King with the most flattering distinction at court, who was proud to do honour to the chief under whom he had gained his first honours on the field of Oudenarde.¹

¹ Coxe, vi.
310-312.
Conduct,
336.

21.
Boling-
broke and
Ormond are
outlawed,
and Oxford
impeached.

One of the first acts of the Whig Government was, in pursuance of an address of the House of Commons—which, with the versatility so common at that period, was now as thoroughly Hanoverian as it had formerly been Jacobite in its policy—to prefer impeachments against Bolingbroke, Ormond, and Oxford, for their accession to the steps taken to overturn the Act of Settlement, and restore the Stuart family to the throne. The two former made their escape into France, where they soon after hoisted, with honourable consistency, their true colours, by openly taking office at the court of St Germain's. Oxford, who was not, like them, conscious of having furthered the views of the Pretender, but, on the contrary, had frustrated them so much, as Berwick informs us in the passage already quoted, as to have led to his dismissal by Queen Anne, remained at home and braved the impeachment. After a long trial he was acquitted by the House of Peers, apparently on very sufficient grounds, as his conduct in bringing about

the Peace of Utrecht, however culpable as a statesman, was no act of treason against the sovereign; and no overt acts directly favouring the Pretender could be brought home to him. Marlborough attended the House during the trial, and voted for the prosecution so far as the accession to the Treaty of Utrecht was concerned; but, with a commendable delicacy to his old *protégé* and comrade in office, he did not take any part in the debates.¹

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¹ Parl. Hist.
vi. 1275-
1292. Coxe,
vi. 315, 316.

Although Marlborough took no active part in general politics after his restoration to the office of Commander-in-Chief, yet occasions were not wanting on which to evince, in a very effective way, his opposition to measures proposed by the Jacobite party in Parliament, with a view to pave the way for a restoration of the Stuart family. One of them was a clause proposed by the Duke of Buckingham, to be inserted in the Military Bill, confining the military to their fixed stations in every part of Great Britain. As this, in effect, took from the Crown the direction of the armed force, and exposed the nation to the danger of rebellion or invasion in one quarter where there were no troops, while a superfluity chained to their garrisons remained inactive in another, Marlborough combated the proposal with such energy and vigour that it was rejected without a division. The other was a still more insidious attempt to paralyse the Crown, by excluding all foreign officers from the British service. Marlborough combated this proposal with peculiar animation. "Thus to cashier," said he, "officers, whose intrepidity and skill I have often experienced—many of whom have served, during twenty-five years, with disinterested zeal and unblemished fidelity—would be the height of ingratitude,² and

22.
Marlbo-
rough's suc-
cessful op-
position to
measures
favouring
the Preten-
der, May
24, 1715.

² Parl. Hist.
vi. 1291-
1293. Coxe,
vi. 315, 316.

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an act of injustice unparalleled even among the most barbarous nations." The justice of these observations was so apparent that this clause too was rejected without a division.

23.
Marlborough's
prompt suppression of
disaffection
among the
Guards.

A more serious movement soon after took place in the metropolis, which became the more alarming from its spreading to the Foot Guards, and even the regiment of which Marlborough was the colonel. A large mob, instigated by the Jacobite leaders, collected in different parts of the town, shouting, "Ormond and High Church for ever!—Down with the Hanover rats!" The contagion soon spread to the Guards, who had good cause of complaint on account of the ill-gotten gains of the contractors who furnished them with clothing and shirts. A detachment of Marlborough's own regiment, on their way to the town, publicly exposed their scanty garments, exclaiming, "These are Hanover shirts!" Marlborough was well aware of the danger of all tumults, from beginnings how small soever, in an excited state of the public mind: the Civil War, which brought Charles I. to the block, began with an old woman throwing a stool, in the High Church of Edinburgh, at the head of a clergyman officiating in the surplice. He immediately, therefore, repaired to the spot, and instituted a rigid inquiry into the alleged grievances. Finding that they were too well founded, he ordered the jackets and shirts complained of to be publicly burnt, and a double supply of each, on an improved model, to be served out to the soldiers. At the same time, he assembled his regiment, and addressed them in one of those speeches so well known in antiquity, which are so powerful in moving the soldier's heart:—"Gentlemen,—I am much concerned to find your complaints so just about the ill state of your clothes. I

take this opportunity to tell you, that I am wholly innocent of this grievance ; and, depend upon it, no application shall be wanting on my part to trace out the measures that have been taken to abuse you and me. I am resolved nothing shall divert me from demanding forthwith satisfaction, (wherever it may happen to fall,) and shall think nothing too much, on my part, for your great services. I have ordered you a new set of clothing, such as will be every way becoming his Majesty's first regiment of Foot Guards. I desire you will return, then, and take your old, till such time as the new can be completed, which, I give you my word, shall be as soon as possible. I have had the honour to serve with some of you a great many campaigns, and believe you will do me the justice to tell the world that I never willingly wronged any of you ; and if I can be serviceable to any (the least) of you, you may readily command it ; and I shall be glad of any opportunity for that purpose. I hope I shall now leave you good subjects to the best of kings, and every way entirely satisfied." These measures, accompanied by a liberal donation of beer, had the desired effect ; and an armed tumult, which had commenced with seditious cries in the Jacobite interest against the Hanoverian family, ended with shouts of " Long live George I. !—Long live the Duke of Marlborough ! " ¹

These events were straws only, but they were straws which showed how the wind set ; and it soon appeared that a pretty stiff breeze was to blow from the North. Notwithstanding the evident peril to the religion and liberties of this country, which was threatened from the unhappy adherence of the Stuart family to the Romish faith, a very considerable party in the western counties

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¹ Coxé, vi.
318, 319.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
476, 477.

24.
Commence-
ment of the
Rebellion
in Scotland
in 1715.

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of England, and by far the greater part of the nobility and gentry in Scotland, adhered, with a fidelity which must command the respect of the brave and the generous to the end of the world, to the standard of their ancient kings. Some of their leaders, as is usual in all civil conflicts, doubtless had objects of personal ambition in view, and were attracted by the titles and offices in perspective, which, with liberal profusion, were scattered among them by the court of St Germain. But the great majority of their followers were actuated by no such motives, and yielded only to a brave and disinterested, and therefore noble, feeling in favour of their sovereign in misfortune. In vain does worldly prudence condemn, political wisdom lament, convulsions originating in such a feeling ; in vain does history point, with real truth, to the ruin which would have overtaken the British empire had the Stuart family, and with it the sway of Romish despotism, been restored in this island. There are impulses in the human heart superior to those of wisdom—there is an interest in a suffering, which is often not to be found in a ruling cause. Success is not always the measure of renown in after times. Leonidas, slain with his three hundred followers, has riveted the attention of the world more than all the annals of Persian conquests ; and among the many scenes of interest which the British islands will present to future days, it may already be foreseen that none will be viewed with greater emotion than the green mounds, amidst the dusky heath, which mark the graves of the Highlanders who fell at Culloden.

The rigid exclusion of the Tories from all offices under Government, which has always been the ruling principle of Whig administration in civil affairs, augmented the

discontent felt by this party upon the accession of the Hanoverian family. The Earl of Mar, who had been the Secretary of State for Scotland under Oxford's administration, and was loud in his professions of loyalty to the new sovereign on his first accession, was so alienated by his exclusion from office that he leant a willing ear to the suggestions of the agents of the Pretender, and raised the standard of rebellion at Castleton of Braemar on the 6th September. So general was the feeling in favour of the exiled family in all the north and east of Scotland, that, though he hoisted his standard with sixty followers only, he was, before the end of the month, at the head of ten thousand men. James was solemnly proclaimed at Castleton on the 8th; while the English Jacobites, at the head of whom was the Earl of Derwentwater, proclaimed him at Warkworth, Alnwick, and Morpeth. It is a curious coincidence that this formidable rebellion, which threatened to desolate the kingdom with civil war, and possibly change the dynasty on the throne, began within a few miles of the spot where our gracious Sovereign, who, by her virtues and graces, has united towards her person the affections of the Red and White Roses, the assent of the understanding, and the loyalty of the heart, now has found a charming retreat, where she dwells in privacy and happiness, surrounded by no other guards but the love of her subjects.¹

This rebellion was a sore trial to Marlborough—more severe than any he had experienced since James II. had been precipitated from the throne, for here was the son of his early patron and benefactor asserting in arms his right to the throne of his fathers. But he was not wanting on this occasion to his principles or his charac-

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25.

The Earl of Mar raises the standard of rebellion at Braemar, Sept. 8.

¹ Mahon's Hist. i. 104-112. Coxe, vi. 321-323.

26. Marlborough's firm and prudent conduct on this crisis.

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ter ; he did not deviate from the line which he had irrevocably taken at the Revolution. The Whig Government acted with that vigour and unanimity which in civil conflicts so often commands success ; and Marlborough ably and energetically seconded their efforts. Parliament voted liberal supplies ; a reward of £100,000 was offered for the seizure of the Pretender, dead or alive ; considerable additions were voted to the land and sea forces ; General Cadogan was sent to demand from the government of the Hague the six thousand men stipulated in the Barrier Treaty for upholding the Protestant succession. Marlborough himself also raised, in a few hours, a large sum of money on his private credit, which he advanced to the Government. Nor were the most active measures omitted for the proper arrangement and moving of the military forces. At the same time the Duke of Somerset, who was father-in-law to Sir William Wyndham, one of the leaders of the insurgents in the west of England, and who had let fall some expressions in their favour, was removed from the office of Master of the Horse, and a new vigour infused into the Government by the appointment of Mr Walpole to the head of the Treasury, vacant by the death of Lord Halifax.¹ *

¹ Mahon, i.
124-178.
Coxe, vi.
324, 325.

27.
Extent of
the insur-
rection, and
measures of
the Govern-
ment.

Government had need of all their energy, for the progress of the insurgents was at first most alarming. It was early discovered that the Rebellion had extensive ramifications in the south and west of England, in which quarter, indeed, the exiled court looked for more decisive support than in Scotland itself. Thither, accordingly,

* " Be easy in your mind, for our cause is so good that Providence cannot but be on our side. The business of 11 [Somerset] was this morning performed, so that the trouble of that matter is now at an end."—*Marlborough to the Duchess*, Tuesday night, Sept. 20, 1715 ; COXE, vi. 326.

their great leader, the Duke of Ormond, was despatched, and he arrived off Plymouth ; but the measures of Government in that quarter had been so prompt and effective that the outbreak was entirely prevented there, and Ormond was obliged to return to France without being able even to effect a landing. But in the north matters were very different. As the whole regular army in Great Britain did not exceed eight thousand men, it was no easy matter to station troops so as to overawe or combat the insurrection in so many quarters, at the opposite ends of the island, at the same time. Marlborough, however, made the most of the limited means at his disposal, and stationed them with his wonted judgment and foresight. General Wightman, who had drawn together nearly all the regular troops in Scotland, was sent to Stirling with 1000 foot and 500 horse ; General Carpenter, with 900 dragoons, was despatched into Northumberland, where he checked the rising, and obliged the insurgents to retire towards the Tweed ; while General Willis, who landed with four regiments from Ireland at Liverpool, moved towards Preston to check the rising in Lancashire, which was hourly expected. Twenty additional regiments were ordered to be raised, and the most active measures everywhere taken to arrest and imprison suspected persons.¹

It was evident that this alarming state of affairs was mainly owing to the ruinous reduction of the military force of the country, which the public mania for extensive economy on the recurrence of peace had forced upon the Government, and which has so often brought the country, or its colonial possessions, to the brink of ruin in subsequent times. But meanwhile the danger was great, and required to be faced ; and so urgent did it soon

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¹ Mahon, i. 220-223. Berwick's Mem. 247—edit. Petitot. Coxe, vi. 327.

28. Early success of the insurgents.

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become that it seemed doubtful to which side, in the first instance at least, success would incline. Mar, having collected about five thousand gallant mountaineers, descended, on 28th September, from the hills to Perth, which he occupied without resistance ; and we have the authority of Berwick, who had access to the best sources of information, for the assertion that, if he had acted with more vigour and ability, he might have driven the troops from Stirling, and made himself master of all Scotland as far as the banks of the Tweed. But he was not a man of military talent, and was still less aware that, in civil conflicts, success in general rewards not the most powerful but the most energetic, who, by activity and vigour in the outset, commands the co-operation of that body—ever a majority of mankind—the waverers and the timid. Instead of pushing on at once to Stirling with his whole force, he despatched one detachment to Inverary, under General Gordon, and two thousand chosen men, under Macintosh, towards Edinburgh, to occupy the metropolis and raise the southern counties. Macintosh executed his commission with skill and resolution. Having reached Burntisland, on the southern coast of Fife, he succeeded by a daring stratagem in eluding the vigilance of the English cruisers in the Firth of Forth, and effected a landing at Aberlady and North Berwick with sixteen hundred men. With this force he advanced to Jock's Lodge, in the immediate vicinity of Edinburgh, on the 14th October ; and the capital was only saved by the rapid march of Argyll, who, having seized all the country horses around Stirling, succeeded in throwing himself, by a forced march, into the town, with five hundred men, at ten at night. Macintosh now found himself overmatched, and he

accordingly did not venture to attack Edinburgh, but retreated first to Leith, and then to Seton House in East Lothian. Meanwhile Mar, with the bulk of his forces, advanced from Perth against General Witham, who had been left in command at Stirling; and that important fortress was only saved by the vigour of Argyll, who returned from Edinburgh as rapidly as he had gone to it, and joined the regular forces as they were returning, within sight of Stirling, from Dumblane. Upon hearing of his arrival in the hostile camp, Mar retreated to Perth without striking a blow—an instance of want of moral resolution which was the more inexcusable that his force was more than triple that opposed to him.¹

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¹ Mahon, i.
244-247.
Berwick,
247, 248.
Coxe, vi.
327, 328.

Macintosh, ignorant of Argyll's return to Stirling, remained a few days at Seton House, where he had strengthened himself in the garden and orchard, hourly expecting an attack. But finding he was not molested, he struck across the Lammermuirs and reached Kelso, where he was joined by Lord Kenmure, who had raised the southern counties of Galloway and Dumfries. Their united force was now above two thousand men, with which, by an attack on Stirling, combined with Mar, they might easily have destroyed, or made prisoners, Argyll, with his fifteen hundred men, in that fortress. But when fortune favoured them, and decisive success was perhaps within their reach, the insurgent cause was paralysed by the want of a leader of tried ability, or a royal chief, whom all must have obeyed. Every one not only urged his own plan, but refused to follow that of any other person. The English horsemen, who had crossed the Border from Northumberland, refused to go farther into Scotland; the Highlanders positively

29.
Movements
in the south
of Scotland,
and advance
into Eng-
land.

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declared they would not go into England. The result was, that, to avoid a rupture, the force moved in a sort of diagonal to Langholm, on the road to Carlisle. There, after a long altercation, the quarrel was adjusted by the Scotch agreeing to enter England, in order to lend a hand to the insurrection in Lancashire, where the country was nearly unanimous in their favour, and an outbreak was hourly expected. But many of the Highlanders withdrew to their hills when this design was announced, and no less than five hundred set off in a body by themselves; so that, when the insurgents entered England on the 1st November, their force was reduced to fourteen hundred men.¹

¹ Mahon, i.
248-250.
Coxe, vi.
328, 329.
Berwick,
250, 251.

30.
Advance of
the insur-
gents to
Preston,
and their
surrender
there.

The sagacious eye of Marlborough had long before fixed on Preston in Lancashire as the place where a decisive struggle in England would ensue, and thither, accordingly, the Royalist forces were directed. General Carpenter, with the dragoons which had subdued Northumberland, was moved on it from the north-east; while General Willis, having collected four regiments of foot and two of horse, was directed towards the same point from Wigan. Meanwhile the insurgents, now reduced to twelve hundred men, advanced without opposition through Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as Preston, in Lancashire, where they were joined by a considerable number of the gentlemen of Lancashire, with their retainers, who were, however, very imperfectly armed. Here the want of military knowledge and firmness sadly appeared in the leaders of the insurgents. They neglected to seize the bridge over the Ribble, which commands the only approach to the town from the south, and contented themselves with stationing their men in its principal squares, and drawing barricades across the streets. There, accord-

ingly, they were speedily enveloped by Carpenter on the north-east, and Willis on the south-west ; but the forces on the outside, though better armed and disciplined, were not yet superior in number to those within. Such, however, was the intimidation produced in the minds of the Jacobite chiefs, at finding themselves thus beleagured in a strange country by forces hourly increasing, that they listened to the proposals of Willis, and agreed to surrender. They laid down their arms, accordingly, to the number of fourteen hundred, on the 14th November. Such was the indignation of the Highlanders at this inglorious capitulation that they at first resolved to sally forth, and cut their way back, sword in hand, to their native hills ; but, being unsupported by the English, they were obliged to abandon the design, and submit to the general doom. Among the persons taken on this occasion were Lords Derwentwater, Widdrington, Nithsdale, Wintoun, Carnwath, Kenmure, Nairn, and Charles Murray—names, some of which have so often thrilled the hearts of the generous in after times, when joined to the witchery of Scottish song, while the fate of others excited such a mournful and tragic interest throughout the world.¹

Meanwhile Mar, having collected eight thousand men, a force double that with which Charles Edward did such great things thirty years afterwards, broke up on the 10th December from Perth, and again took the road to Stirling. But the circumstances were very different from what they were a month before, when he might, by a little vigour, have made himself master of all Scotland. Several regiments had been hurried over from Ireland, and Argyll at Stirling was now at the head of three thousand three hundred regular troops, of whom twelve

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¹ Mahon, i.
254-256.
Berwick,
249. Coxe,
vi. 330, 331.

31.
Advance of
Mar to She-
riffmuir,
Nov. 10.

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hundred were cavalry. Mar was joined by Gordon with two thousand men, chiefly from the western counties, which he had raised after an unsuccessful attack on Inverary. But although this reinforcement raised the numerical amount of the insurgents to ten thousand men, yet, being only half-armed, they presented so motley an array that it was thought there were more firelocks in the comparatively diminutive royal army. On the 12th, Mar with the united force reached Ardoch, and his troops bivouacked in the noble Roman Camp there, the largest and most perfect in Britain. Argyll, who deemed himself sufficiently strong to engage, did not decline the combat ; and on the following day, the 13th, being the very day of the capitulation at Preston, both armies approached each other on the SHERIFFMUIR, an open heath stretching from the highroad from Perth to Stirling, towards the foot of the Ochil Hills, so called from its having been the place where the armed force of the county, arrayed by the sheriff, had been exercised in former days.¹

¹ Mahon, i. 257-259. Coxe, vi. 328. Berwick, 249.

32.
Commence-
ment of the
battle, and
success of
Argyll on
his right.

When Mar saw that the enemy stood firm, he called a council of war to determine whether they should fight or retire. "Fight, fight !" was the universal cry ; and the words being heard in the ranks, such a tumult of cheers and tossing up of bonnets arose that the resolution was in a manner carried by acclamation. Mar himself was on his own right, but the battle began on his left towards the hills. The insurgents there, who were drawn up in admirable order, opened on Argyll's men a fire so close and well directed that even Marlborough's veterans were staggered. But Argyll's experienced eye discerned a morass on their flank, by which, as it was frozen over by the severe frost of the

preceding night, they might be charged in flank. Thither accordingly he sent a squadron of horse under Captain Cathcart, who charged the insurgents on their left side, while he himself, with two squadrons, assailed them in front. The double shock proved irresistible; the horsemen bore down the Highland ranks, and the whole left wing of the Jacobites was driven back to a considerable distance from the field of battle. Their retreat, however, was that of the lion when he retires before a circle of hunters, for nine times in the course of it they faced about and poured in volleys upon their pursuers. Argyll behaved with equal humanity and gallantry on this occasion, offering quarter to all who would surrender; and on one occasion he was seen himself parrying three strokes aimed by one of his troopers at a Highland gentleman.¹

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¹ Mahon, i.
259, 260.
Berwick,
249. Coxe,
vi. 329.

But while fortune thus smiled on the royal arms on their right, where Argyll commanded, a very different scene presented itself on their left, where General Witham had the command. How often during that century,

33.
Success of
the insur-
gents on the
right and in
the centre.

“When the volleying musket played
Against the bloody Highland blade,”

has victory inclined to the inexperienced arms of fidelity and devotion! The first fire of the English mortally wounded Clanranald, who had served with distinction abroad under Marshal Berwick, and his men were thrown into some disorder by the discharge. But Glengarry, who had borne the royal standard at the battle of Killcrankie, immediately started from the ranks, and throwing his bonnet into the air, exclaimed in Gaelic,—“Revenge! Revenge! To-day for revenge, to-morrow for mourning!” Animated by these words, the Highlanders rushed forward, and parrying the bayonet-thrust with their broadswords, or averting them

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by their targets, they dealt destruction around. In a few minutes the whole of Argyll's left wing broke and fled; General Witham himself never stopped till he was in the streets of Stirling. The left centre of the English followed the example, and fled back to the Forth; and so great was the panic, that, had the right centre been charged instead of the fugitives being pursued by the victorious Highlanders, a decisive victory would have been gained. But this opportunity, as is so often the case in war, was lost; and General Wightman took advantage of a few minutes' breathing-time to draw off the right centre and join Argyll, who was returning from the pursuit of the wing he had beaten.¹

¹ Mahon, i.
260, 261.
Berwick,
249.

34.
Indecisive
result of the
battle, but
which turns
to the ad-
vantage of
the English.

Argyll, upon hearing of the disaster of his left and centre, immediately led back his right wing, and joined Wightman and the remains of the centre. Mar did the same with his right, which had pursued the enemy to the very gates of Stirling; and the two armies mutually regained the field of battle on the Sheriffmuir. There Mar took up a position to guard against the horse, in which arm the English were greatly superior, on an eminence which commanded a view all around. Soon Argyll's men appeared painfully toiling their way over a bad road at the foot of the hill, so wearied, and in such woeful plight, that, by the admission of the English general himself, an attack from the Highlanders must have entirely destroyed their army.* But Mar,

* "If they had either courage or conduct, they might have entirely destroyed my body of foot; but it pleased God to the contrary."—*Wightman's Official Despatch*, Nov. 14, 1715. Argyll himself, hearing it said the victory was not complete, answered in the words of the Scottish song—

"If it was na weel bobbit, weel bobbit, weel bobbit,
If it was na weel bobbit, we'll bob it again."

though personally brave, was destitute of military conduct. He allowed the enemy to defile beneath him, where they were already taking measures to repel an attack; and instead of directing a charge, ordered the bagpipes to play a retreat. It was then that an old Highland officer, Gordon of Glenbucket, who had seen Killiecrankie, uttered the celebrated exclamation,—“Oh for an hour of Dundee!” Both parties retreated: Argyll slept at Dumblane, and next day withdrew to Stirling; and Mar wended his way back to his old quarters at Perth.¹

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¹ Mahon, i.
262, 263.
Berwick,
250. Coxe,
vi. 328.

It is with an insurrection as with an invading army: a drawn battle is equivalent to a defeat; continued success is the condition of existence. Disaster, long-continued, and in the end overwhelming, from that date assailed the Stuart cause. Several of the clans had been lukewarm in their support, and openly counselled submission before the battle began; others dropped off after the retreat to Perth. Soon the insurgent army was reduced to half its numbers; and Mar himself, seeing no appearance of the Chevalier, and hearing of the disaster at Preston, privately communicated with Argyll as to the possibility of a general submission. Argyll was disposed to receive it favourably, and applied to Government for powers to that effect; but Ministers had other views. Having crushed the insurrection in Lancashire, and averted that in Devonshire, they were not disposed to treat for a capitulation with that in Scotland, but resolved to push their advantages to the uttermost. So far, therefore, from enlarging Argyll's powers, they deprived him of his command, and, by Marlborough's advice, bestowed it on General Cadogan.

35.
Argyll is
superseded
in the com-
mand by
Cadogan.

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ful to his trust ; his activity, which saved Edinburgh, his gallantry, which stemmed disaster at Sheriffmuir, forbade such a supposition. But, with all his valour and eloquence, he wanted the still more important requisite of *firmness of conduct*. His political vacillation necessarily rendered him suspected in critical times. He had rendered himself, by repeated attacks, personally obnoxious to Marlborough;* and the enmity between them had grown up to such a pitch that no cordial co-operation was any longer to be hoped for ; so that Cadogan's appointment had become a matter of necessity.¹

¹ Mahon, i.
268-270.
Tindal, vi.
492.

36.
Arrival of
the Preten-
der in Scot-
land, and
his recep-
tion at
Seone, Jan.
8, 1715.

Cadogan brought with him powerful reinforcements ; and the six thousand auxiliaries stipulated by the Barrier Treaty had landed in England in the middle of November, and were already in full march for Scotland. The insurgents, whose numbers were daily falling off, had decreased in a still more rapid proportion, so that the rebellion was now virtually extinguished. It was at this inauspicious moment that the Chevalier at length landed at Peterhead on December 22d, attended only by six persons, one of whom was son to the Duke of Berwick. His arrival might have led to decisive success, if it had taken place at an earlier period, by stilling the discord of the rival chiefs ; but his coming at this gloomy season could only throw a parting gleam over a falling cause. He proceeded southwards—passed *incognito* through Aberdeen—received Mar with great distinction at the manor of Fetteresso—and made a public entry into Dundee on January 6th, with the Earl of Mar riding on his right hand and the Earl

* "It is impossible to have a lower opinion than I have of the Duke of Argyll."—*Marlborough* ; TINDAL, vi. 492.

Mareschal on his left, and followed by a brilliant train of three hundred gentlemen on horseback. From thence he proceeded to Scone—the place where his ancestors had so often been crowned—and there issued several proclamations. The first ordered a general thanksgiving for the “miraculous providence” shown in his safe arrival; the second gave currency to all foreign coins; the third ordered the convocation of a Parliament; the fourth ordered his coronation at Scone on 23d January; and the fifth summoned all persons from sixteen to sixty to join his standard.¹

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¹ Original
Papers, 160.
Mahon, i.
271, 272.

Immense was the enthusiasm excited at the time by the arrival of the exiled prince in the land of his fathers; but it soon appeared that the hand of fate was upon him, and that nothing could much longer arrest its resistless weight. The men remaining of the clans were so much reduced that they could not venture on the customary spectacle of a review; and the Prince was so disheartened by their scanty numbers that he could not conceal his chagrin. He himself had none of the qualities requisite to uphold a falling cause. He had considerable abilities, great powers of language, and popular, graceful manners in peace; but he had little vigour or energy in character, and none of the habits or ideas which win the hearts of the soldiery in war. He could not handle a musket, and knew nothing of the broadsword exercise. Despair and discouragement followed his appearance amongst them; and so hopeless did affairs soon become, that, though it had been determined to fortify and defend Perth, Mar had in secret resolved, if Cadogan advanced against him, to abandon it without striking a blow.² The discouragement was increased by the intelligence of the surprise of Inverness by Lord Lovat,

37.
Passing en-
thusiasm
and real
difficulties
following on
his arrival.

² Berwick's
Mem. 256,
257. Ma-
hon, i. 271,
278.

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who on this occasion acted on the Hanoverian side—a disaster which, by depriving them of the northern capital of the Highlands, appeared to render the condition of the insurgents altogether desperate.

38.
Re-embark-
ation of the
Pretender,
and sup-
pression of
the insur-
rection.

Meanwhile Cadogan, having collected an overwhelming force at Stirling, commenced his march to the northward, in the midst of snow, and in a season of uncommon rigour. Argyll was with the vanguard; and he was so discontented by the intelligence of the preparations for the abandonment of Perth, which were received as they bivouacked on the snow amidst the smoking ruins of Auchterarder, that his chagrin was visible to all the bystanders.* When the order to retreat towards Aberdeen was first issued, the indignation among the Highlanders at retiring before their enemies was so vehement that it almost amounted to open mutiny. "What," said one of them, "did you call us to arms for? Was it to run away? What did the king come here for? Was it to see his people butchered by the hangman, and not strike one stroke for their lives? Let us die like men, and not like dogs! We must take the person of our monarch out of the hands of his present timid counselors; and then, if he is willing to die like a prince, he will find that there are ten thousand gentlemen of Scotland who are not afraid to die with him!" But though

* "The Duke of Argyll grows so intolerably uneasy that it is almost impossible to live with him any longer. He is enraged at the success of this expedition, though he and his creatures attribute to themselves the honour of it. When I brought him the news of the rebels being run from Perth he seemed thunderstruck, and was so visibly concerned with it that even the foreign officers in the room took notice of it. Since the rebels quitted Perth, he has sent for five hundred of his Argyll men. Not one of them appeared when the rebels were in Perth, when they might have been of some use."—*Cadogan to Marlborough*, Feb. 4, 1716; COXE, vi. 335.

these heroic sentiments did honour to the brave men who uttered them, and showed what means *had been* at the disposal of the leaders of the insurrection, they could not supply the present deficiencies. The army was without either fuel or provisions; ammunition was becoming scanty; and the superiority of the enemy, both in numbers, artillery, and cavalry, was overwhelming. A retreat was therefore agreed to on the 29th, and promulgated on the 30th. In sullen despair the Highlanders obeyed the dreaded summons—but such was their indignation that most of the clans separated on the road; and when they reached Aberdeenshire, all appearance of an army was at an end. The Pretender himself gave the slip to his attendants, and embarked at Montrose, on the night of the 4th of February, with Lord Mar, and arrived in safety at Gravelines. His last act was to send a sum of money, the remains of his slender resources, to the Duke of Argyll, to be applied in indemnifying the cottagers in Auchterarder, whose houses had been burned by his orders, “So that I may at least have the satisfaction of having been the destruction of none, when I came to free all.” Marlborough forbade all pursuit of the Highlanders into their hills, well knowing that no army could maintain itself there, and putting in practice an opinion which he had expressed years before in Flanders, “That if he ever commanded against the Highlanders, he would never be at the trouble of following them into their hills, to run the risk of ruining an army by fatigue and want, but would post himself so as to starve them if they kept together, or till, by their natural inconstancy, they separated, after which every one would do his best to get terms.”¹

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¹ Sinclair's
Mem. MS.
343. Ma-
hon, i. 276-
285. Ber-
wick, 257-
259.

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X.

1714.

39.

Conviction
and sen-
tence of
Derwent-
water, &c.

Thanks to the foresight and arrangements of Marlborough, and the vigour of the Government, the insurrection was now suppressed, and the Hanoverian family firmly seated on the throne. But the disaster did not stop here ; the days of real mourning were to begin.

“ Ah, no ! for a darker departure is near ;
The war-drum is muffled, and harnessed the bier.”

In Scotland, few prisoners of note were taken, and the annals of its courts are not stained by unnecessary or lamentable severity. But it was otherwise in England ; and Walpole, who was prime-minister, though by no means, as his subsequent long career proved, inclined to severity, deemed the risk run too great, the escape made too narrow, to permit lenity to be generally extended to the prisoners. Two noblemen and twenty-six commoners died on the scaffold for fidelity to their sovereign in misfortune. Six peers were indicted ; and as their accession to the rebellion was self-evident, they all pleaded guilty except Lord Wintoun, who was convicted on trial, but afterwards escaped. Great interest was made by persons of the highest rank in favour of the unfortunate noblemen who had been convicted ; many of the leading Whigs openly declared on the side of mercy ; and so strongly was the public mind moved that petitions for their reprieve were thrown out only by a majority of seven in the Commons, and actually carried by one of five in the Lords. Alarmed with this unexpected opposition, the cabinet respited three of the noblemen—Lord Nairn, the Earl of Carnwath, and Lord Widdrington—but ordered the execution of Derwentwater, Kenmure, and Nithsdale, the following morning.¹ Nithsdale escaped from the Tower in woman's dress the night before the

¹ State Trials, xv. 747-801. Coxe's Walpole, ii. 51. Hallam's Constitut. Hist. iii. 562. Mahon, i. 285-291.

execution ; but the two former were destined to seal their faith with their blood.

They did so, and did it nobly. The scaffold, covered with black, was erected on Tower Hill, already stained by the blood of the first and the noblest in English story. Derwentwater was the first to suffer : he turned pale as he ascended the fatal steps, but his voice was firm, and his demeanour steady and composed. He passed some time in prayer ; and then rising up, declared that he died a Roman Catholic ; that he deeply repented his plea of "guilty," and expressions of contrition at his trial ; and that he acknowledged James III., and him alone, as his rightful sovereign. "I intended," he added, "to wrong no one, but to serve my king and country, hoping, by the example I gave, to have induced others to do their duty ; and God, who sees the secrets of my heart, knows I speak the truth. I am in perfect charity with all the world : I thank God for it ; even with those of the present Government who have been the most instrumental in my death." He then took off his coat, and told the executioner he should strike when he repeated for the third time the words, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul !" He then laid down his head, gave the sign, and the executioner severed it at one blow. Lord Kenmure evinced equal firmness in the last hour. He was attended to the scaffold by his son and two clergymen of the Church of England. He also expressed regret at having pleaded guilty at the trial ; offered up a prayer for James III., whom he declared he owned as his lawful sovereign ; calmly knelt down at the block, and his head was severed from his body at two blows. The subordinate offenders, in number twenty-four, died with equal dignity and resolution.¹

CHAP.
X.

1714.

40.

Noble death
of Derwent-
water and
Kenmure,
Feb. 24,
1716.

¹ Mahon, i.
294-297.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

41.
Reflections
on this sub-
ject, and
impolicy of
death for
political
crimes.

These melancholy and yet heart-stirring details suggest one consideration of general and lasting importance to mankind ; this is the expedience and justice of all civilised nations revising their civil code, and abolishing entirely the punishment of death in purely political offences. Crime alone is the fit object of punishment ; and the essence of crime consists in a wicked or felonious *intent*. Political acts, however hostile to the ruling power, are not necessarily the result of such intent ; on the contrary, they are often produced by the noblest feelings which can fill the breast, and, when successful in the end, command the eternal admiration and gratitude of mankind. Witness frequent allusion, in after times, to the cause for which Hampden bled in the field, and Sidney on the scaffold ; the undying admiration for the heroism of Wallace, the achievements of Tell. In vain does the historian* say, with emphatic brevity, that “ he who has bravely ventured, has justly forfeited his life ;” in vain does the lawyer repeat, that “ treason is the greatest of all crimes, because it leads to the commission of all the others.” The sense of justice in the human breast has long since rejected such doctrines—common sense detected their fallacy. If they were well founded, quarter should never be given in war, but prisoners all be massacred in cold blood ; for every one in battle ventures his life ; and no one need be told that murder, robbery, and conflagration, follow in the footsteps of hostile armies. All parties, in the future ages of the world, will probably have an equal interest in introducing such a mitigated code of civil hostility, for none can foresee how soon they may themselves be constrained to invoke its protection : the ruthless code has so long been in force only because security has steeled

* Gibbon.

the heart to pity, or experienced wrongs upraised the arm for vengeance.

The true way of dealing with such offences is to take vigorous measures, more so than are now generally adopted against the *commencement* of insurrections, or the propagation of the incitements which lead to them ; but when the conflict once begins, to treat the captives as prisoners of war, or at most pronounce sentence of banishment or transportation upon them. Death or confiscation of property seems altogether unsuitable for a civil struggle for power, as much as it is for a national contest for territory. He who strives to displace the government cannot complain if he is displaced himself ; and, therefore, banishment from the country whose peace has been disturbed is the natural and just retribution for unsuccessful rebellion. But he has great reason to complain if, because he aimed at displacing the government, he is brought to the scaffold, and his children reduced to beggary. It is a mistake to suppose that excessive severity stifles rebellion ; on the contrary, it often induces it. The reaction against cruelty produces fresh outbreaks. Henry VIII. put seventy-two thousand persons to death on the scaffold in his single reign ; and Elizabeth had a grim array of three hundred heads, many of them of her relatives and former friends, on London Bridge ; but the frightful array did not prevent high treason being more frequent in those reigns than in any other period of English history. The noble blood shed, the moving constancy displayed in 1715, produced the Rebellion of 1745. In nothing is the blessed influence of civilisation more shown than in the mitigation so generally introduced, in the nations which are its leaders, of the terrible penalties of high treason. Time will

CHAP.
X.

1714.
42.
True way
of dealing
with such
cases.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

show whether it is not also the most expedient ; whether the bloodless suppression of the rebellion in Ireland, in 1848, was not more effectual in stilling discord in the Emerald Isle than the ruthless severity of Austrian vengeance in extinguishing that in Hungary in the next year. If an insurrection commences with murder, pillage, and conflagration, its authors should be dealt with, not as *rebels*, but as *pirates*—the enemies of the human race. But if it is conducted according to the laws of civilised warfare, its leaders should be dealt with by the same code. This lenity of the victors is perfectly consistent with, and in fact part of the same system as, the most vigilant *preventive* measure against so great an evil as civil war, and the utmost energy in combating it the instant it breaks out. In fact, they are parts of the same disposition. Terror in presence of danger, and cruelty after it, are as much the mark of a cowardly, as courage, in the first situation, and humanity in the last, are of a heroic mind.

43.
Treachery
of the Eng-
lish Go-
vernment to
the Cata-
lans, 1713,
1714.

Fidelity in misfortune was not evinced alone by the mountaineers of Scotland in the termination of this terrible conflict. Spain also exhibited a memorable example of heroism in circumstances where the greatest courage might have quailed ; and the English historian has a melancholy satisfaction in recounting it as the only compensation he can tender for the treachery of his Government to their gallant allies. When Queen Anne encouraged the inhabitants of Catalonia to take up arms, she pledged herself to maintain their ancient privileges ; and this promise was renewed when Charles VI., after the peace of Utrecht, concluded a separate treaty of evacuation. But the British cabinet, under the direction of Oxford and Bolingbroke, entirely forgot the

national faith thus doubly pledged in the face of Europe, and to the last of which pledges they themselves had been parties. In the articles of pacification, accordingly, submitted by Lord Lexington, the English minister to the Spanish court in 1713, there was no mention made of the Catalan constitution, but merely of an armistice in that province; and in the correspondence of Bolingbroke with the plenipotentiaries of Utrecht, their privileges are described as contrary to the interests of England, and not so expedient as those of Castile. But the Catalans thought otherwise; and, though deserted by all the world, and even by the great maritime power which had first incited them to take up arms, they prepared singly to maintain the conflict. From the days of Numantia and Astapa to those of Saragossa and Gerona, the national character of the Spaniards has been the same; and the siege of BARCELONA may be added to the many others which have rendered their name immortal.¹

CHAP.
X.
1714.

¹ Coxe's House of Bourbon, ii. 60-64. Berwick's Mem. 200, 201.

As the intrepid spirit of the Catalans, and their resolution to maintain their privileges, were well known, Philip no sooner heard that they were determined, at all hazards, to resist, unless their ancient constitution was conceded to them, than he made applications both to the French and English governments for aid to enable him to force them into submission. Louis immediately sent the Duke of Berwick, with twenty thousand men, to join the Spanish forces in conducting the siege of Barcelona; and Oxford, to his shame be it said, permitted a British fleet to co-operate indirectly in the blockade. Meanwhile the Catalans, then reduced to their own resources, made the most heroic efforts to maintain their independence. Their regular force in the city amounted

44.
Resolution and heroic efforts of the people, 1713, 1714..

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Case of
the Catal-
ans, 37.
Coxe's
House of
Bourbon,
ii. 64-66.
Tindal,
xviii. 301.

45.
Arrival of
the Duke
of Berwick,
and forces
of the be-
siegers,
June 1714.

only to sixteen thousand men; but the armed citizens amounted to as many more, and the spirit with which they were animated rendered them most formidable opponents in defending ramparts. Every effort was made to rouse and animate them. A tribunal, armed with the powers of life and death, was erected; a regular war by sea and land was declared against France and Spain; a fleet of fourteen light ships fitted out; fresh fortifications erected; barricades thrown up across the streets; the walls of the houses pierced for loopholes; the aged and children sent to Minorca, and the women divided into bands to succour the wounded. The bishop solemnly blessed their cause, amidst the mingled tears and cheers of the people; the inferior clergy followed the example; while, to keep up their hope of foreign succour, the solemn promise of the Queen of England to support their privileges was deposited, with great solemnity, on the high altar of the cathedral.¹

The Catalans had need of all their courage and resources, for the preparations of France and Spain for their reduction were most formidable. The blockade began in November 1713; but the want of heavy artillery, or any force adequate to the siege of so strong a fortress so defended, prevented the commencement of regular approaches till the end of June in the following year, when the arrival of the twenty thousand French auxiliaries raised the besieging force around its walls to thirty-five thousand men, besides eight thousand stationed at Gerona to keep up the communication with France, and eight thousand scattered through Catalonia to overawe its warlike inhabitants. In the end of June, Berwick arrived with the patent of generalissimo to take the command; and that brave and humane prince had

no sooner done so than he was horrified at discovering the savage intentions of the government, and of what cruelties he was intended to be the unwilling instrument. The orders to him were peremptory, if the besieged allowed the trenches to be commenced, to admit of no surrender but at discretion. Berwick was so shocked at this severity that he wrote both to Louis XIV. and the court of Madrid for fresh and more lenient instructions. He could obtain, however, no material modification. "The ministers," says he, "spoke of nothing but the grandeur of their monarch, the justice of their cause, and the despicable character of those who should venture to attack us. *All the insurgents were to be put to the sword*; all those who had not taken an active part in Philip's favour during the civil war were to be treated as enemies, while those who had aided him were to be regarded only as having done their duty, without receiving any recompense. Had the ministers and generals of Spain held a more moderate language, Barcelona would have capitulated as soon as the Austrians withdrew; but as the cabinet and the Duke de Popoli, who had the command, spoke only of the sack and the cord, the people became furious and desperate. Popoli had a personal cause of enmity to the inhabitants, on account of some insults offered to his wife when the Archduke took the town in 1705."¹

The death of Anne, and accession of the Hanoverian family to the throne of England, produced only a fruitless appeal to the humanity of the Spanish government in behalf of the Catalans, and an order for the British fleet to withdraw from the blockade. George I. was too much occupied with the dangers of Jacobite insurrection at home, and had too small an armed force

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Berwick's Mem. 203, 205. Coxe's House of Bourbon, ii. 65-67.

46.
Preparations on both sides for the siege, and opening of the trenches, July 12.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

at his disposal, to be able to think of foreign hostilities. Thus abandoned to their own resources, the Catalans with mournful resolution continued their resistance; the savage cruelty of the Spanish government had left them no alternative but victory or death. Berwick found in the camp eighty-seven heavy cannon and thirty-three mortars, with 1,500,000 pounds of powder, and every supply requisite for the longest siege; it was only a question, therefore, to which quarter his attacks should be directed. He determined to commence the attack on the side next the sea. On the 12th July, trenches were opened by ten battalions of foot and as many companies of grenadiers, and next day two considerable sallies, one with four, the other with six thousand men, were repulsed after a violent struggle, with considerable loss to the besieged. At the same time twenty vessels and a frigate steering for the port were captured by the blockading squadron coming from Majorca; but thirty others, with three transports, reached the harbour in safety, and brought supplies of provisions, which proved of essential service to the besieged.¹

¹ Berwick, 207, 208. Coxe's House of Bourbon, ii. 67, 68.

47. Progress of the siege.

The breaching batteries opened their fire on the 25th July from eighty heavy cannon; and such was the execution done, that, by the 12th August, three breaches were made on the outworks of three bastions, which were stormed on that day; but on the next the besieged drove them out with the loss of fifteen hundred men. At the same time a Miquelet chief, Del Poul, descended from the mountains with twelve thousand mountaineers, and came within a few leagues of the French camp; but Berwick attacked and defeated him with very severe loss. Having thus secured his rear, he resumed the siege with

fresh vigour ; and so effective was the fire, that by the 10th September *seven* huge breaches yawned in different parts of the rampart, at the foot of all which the ditch was filled up and the outworks carried. In these circumstances farther resistance was hopeless, and Berwick, moved by humanity, sent a flag of truce to propose a capitulation. But the summons was sternly rejected, and the besieged, headed by their leaders, repaired with desperate resolution to the breaches to resist the assault.¹

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Berwick,
211, 212.
St Philippe,
ii. 296-300.
Coxe's
House of
Bourbon,
ii. 68.

The storm took place on the 11th September, and was one of the most bloody and dreadful recorded in history. At the signal of ten guns and twenty mortars, which were discharged at daybreak, the whole besieging force moved forward to the assault : fifty battalions led the attack, while forty more were in reserve ready to support them. The attack was directed against the three bastions which had been breached, and, the garrison not expecting an assault so early, the besiegers entered without much difficulty, and got into the streets of the town. But it was there, as in after times at Saragossa, that the conflict really began. A terrible fire was opened on the assailants from the barricades and loopholed houses ; and such was the vigour of the defence that the French were driven out of the bastion of St Peter, and, after being several times taken and retaken, it finally remained in the possession of the Spaniards. Berwick, alarmed by the dreadful carnage at that spot, hastened in person and drew off his men, after above two thousand had fallen in the murderous conflict. But in other quarters the assailants were more successful ; and Villaroit, the governor of the town, was wounded. At length, at three in the afternoon, after a dreadful conflict of ten hours'

^{48.}
Dreadful
storm of
the town,
Sept. 11.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

duration, in which nearly every male inhabitant within the place had borne a part, the besieged beat a parley, and demanded to capitulate. Berwick promised that their lives should be spared, and the besieged were left for the night in possession of their barricades. Next day the victors made their entry into the town on all sides, with such order that not a soldier quitted the ranks; and after one of the most desperate assaults recorded in history, the prodigy was exhibited of discipline being entirely preserved, and not a shop pillaged or a woman violated—"a circumstance," says Berwick, "which can be ascribed only to God, for all the power of man could not have restrained the soldiers."¹

¹ Berwick, 213-215. Coxe's House of Bourbon, ii. 68, 69.

49.

Humanity of Berwick to the besieged, and termination of the War of the Succession.

This memorable siege cost the besiegers, by Berwick's admission, ten thousand men: the loss of the besieged did not exceed six thousand. Berwick enhanced the glory of his conquest by the clemency which he showed to the vanquished. Twenty of the leaders were sent to the castle of Alicante, where they were imprisoned, and two hundred ecclesiastics were banished to Italy. But no blood was shed on the scaffold—a circumstance so much at variance with the usual cruelty of the Spanish character, and the declared intentions of the government, that it can be ascribed only to the humane interposition of Berwick. A few days after, he granted a favourable capitulation to the Count of Montemard in Caulona, which had the effect of entirely terminating the war in the Peninsula. Majorca alone still held out for Charles; but the fame of Berwick's clemency, and the arrival of ten thousand French troops, induced its inhabitants, after every preparation for resistance had been made,² to accept the very favourable terms which were offered to

² Coxe's House of Bourbon, ii. 70-73. St Philippe, ii. 304-307. Berwick, 216, 217.

them ; and with their submission to Philip TERMINATED
THE WAR OF THE SUCCESSION. CHAP.
X.

James Fitzjames, Duke of Berwick, who had the glory of bringing this bloody and long-continued war to a conclusion, was born in London on 21st August 1670—the natural son of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., and of Arabella Churchill, sister of the Duke of Marlborough. So decided was his turn for a military life, that, when only fifteen, he left the pleasures and seductions of the court of London to learn the art of war under one of its masters, Charles, Duke of Lorraine, then general of the Imperial armies in Hungary ; and he made his first campaigns against the Turks. He was distinguished at the siege of Buda, and shared in the glorious victory of Mohatz. When his father, James, was driven from the throne, he joined him, and was with him in his expedition into Ireland, and at the battle of the Boyne, where he received the only wound he met with in his long career. In 1692 he beheld from the coast of Normandy the destruction of all the hopes of his house at the battle of La Hogue, and served under Luxembourg in Flanders till the conclusion of the war by the Treaty of Ryswick. In 1704 he was intrusted with the command of the army in Spain : “ All parties,” says Montesquieu, “ were anxious to gain him : he thought only of the monarchy, saved Spain, and was recalled.” Affairs having again become desperate in the Peninsula, he was sent out a second time as marshal and commander-in-chief : he gained the battle of Almanza in 1706, and again saved Spain to the house of Bourbon. His skilful defence of Languedoc in the subsequent years has always been regarded by military men as a model of defensive warfare.”¹

1714.
50.
Biography
of Marshal
Berwick.

¹ Biog.
Univ. iv.
384, (Ber-
wick.)

CHAP.

X.

1714.

51.

His character.

Berwick was one of the greatest generals and noblest characters of that age of glory. Lord Bolingbroke said, "he was the *best* great man that ever existed." His character, both as a general and in private, was irreproachable. He had not the daring in counsel of Marlborough or Eugene, but he equalled either of these commanders in methodical warfare; and when the moment of action arrived, none exposed their life with more intrepidity. But he preferred combination to hazard, and never committed to chance what he could gain by perseverance. He was the perfection of the Turenne school of warfare. It is a most extraordinary fact, that while Marlborough all but overturned the monarchy of France by his victories in Flanders, and unquestionably would have done so but for faction at home, his nephew, Berwick, by his single arm, preserved that of Spain for the house of Bourbon. His private character was unblemished: bred up in a licentious court, himself the fruit of irregular amours, he avoided all its seductions, and "shunned," in Montesquieu's words, "the snares of virtue itself." His humanity after victory was as admirable as his arrangements before, which secured it. England has equal cause to be proud of her victories and her defeats in that warfare, for they both were owing to the military genius of the same family—and that one of her own. She may well claim Berwick among her great men; for not only was he born in England, but he was descended, by the father's side, from the mingled line of the Plantagenets and the Stuarts, and by the mother's from Sir Francis Drake; and he bore in his veins the same blood as the Duke of Marlborough. There are few men who can boast a more illustrious ancestry and connection, and still fewer who have done so much to ennoble it.¹

¹ Biog.
Univ. iv.
385. Montesquieu—
Eloge de
Berwick.

It was just permitted to the monarch whose guilty ambition had lighted this terrible conflagration to witness its extinction. Louis XIV. expired on the 1st September 1715, at the very time when the Jacobite insurrection in Scotland was apparently opening the way for the restoration of the Stuarts, whom he had so nobly sheltered in their misfortune, to the throne. His advanced age—for he was seventy-seven—rendered a prolonged life neither probable nor desirable; but his latter years had been clouded by misfortunes, both national and domestic, which formed a mournful contrast to the brilliancy of his earlier career. Independent of the public calamities which had signalised the latter years of the war, he had been severely stricken by misfortune in private life. In 1711, his son, the Duke of Burgundy, his daughter-in-law, the Duchess, and their son, the heir of the monarchy, were carried off by the small-pox within a few days of each other. A single funeral service, at which the aged monarch assisted, was performed for the father, mother, and son. Though Louis bore this grievous calamity with his wonted firmness, the bereavement sunk deep into his heart, and all the efforts of the courtiers were unable to divert his settled melancholy. In vain the splendid halls of Versailles were arrayed, after the peace, with more than their wonted splendour; in vain forty of the most charming women in France, elegantly dressed, every day adorned his repasts; in vain magnificent balls assembled every week all the nobility and beauty of the metropolis in his saloons: nothing could distract his gloom, nothing restore the joyousness of his youth. His strength was daily and visibly declining;¹ his limbs were swollen, his visage haggard, and, instead of dancing with

CHAP.

X.

1714.

52.

Last years
of Louis
XIV.

¹ Capesigue,
Hist. de
Louis XIV.
vi. 419-424.
Biographie
Univ. xxv.
197, 198.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

53.
His death,
Sept. 1.
1715.

the youngest and fairest at his court, he was drawn painfully in a little carriage through the splendid halls and marbled parterres of Versailles.

At length the closing hour arrived ; and the monarch whose insatiable ambition had sent so many innocent souls prematurely out of the world was himself called to his dread account. He met the approach of death with calmness and equanimity ; but he was much disquieted by remorse of conscience, particularly for the share he had had in the most flagrant iniquity of his reign—the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Apprehensive of the extinction of the male line of the Bourbons, he, by an edict of 15th May 1715, called his natural sons, now legitimised, the Duke of Maine and the Count of Toulouse, to the throne, failing his grandson Louis XV. When death was visibly approaching, the aged monarch ordered his infant heir, afterwards Louis XV., to be brought to his bedside, and, placing his lean and withered hands on his head, said, with a firm voice, “ My child, you are about to become a great king ; but your happiness will depend on your submission to God, and on the care which you take of your subjects. To attain that, you must avoid as much as you can engaging in wars, which are the ruin of the people ; do not follow, in that respect, the bad example which I have given you. I have often engaged in wars from levity, and continued in them from vanity ; do not imitate me, but become a pacific prince ; profit by the good education which Madame de Ventadour is giving you, and obey and follow the good sentiments which she inspires.” He then tenderly thanked that accomplished lady for her kindness to her youthful charge, and prepared himself for death.¹ Madame de Maintenon was indefatigable, night and day, at his bed-

¹ Capefigue, vi. 456-460. Biog. Univ. xxv. 198, 199. Sismondi, Hist. des Français, xxvii. 215-217.

side. "What consoles me," said the dying monarch, "is, that we shall soon be reunited." He breathed his last at five in the morning, on the 1st September. "The king is dead, gentlemen!" cried the chamberlain, when the feather no longer moved before his lips; the sumptuous doors of the apartment were thrown open, and an infant of five years old, adorned by the *cordon bleu*, thrown over a violet velvet dress, advanced into the chamber of death, amidst cries of "Vive le Roi Louis XV., nôtre seigneur et maître!"

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X.

1714.

Bolingbroke did not long profit by his double treachery to his sovereign and his country; he soon found that, though kings sometimes approve of treason, they seldom like the traitor. He had been made Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the exiled monarch, immediately after he fled from England, in 1714; but he only held the office for one year, being suddenly dismissed in November 1715. He fell a victim to the same intrigues and jealousy by which he himself had effected the downfall of Marlborough at the court of London. He immediately renounced all connection with the Jacobite party, and made overtures to Lord Stair, the English ambassador at Paris, which led to his ultimate restoration to the country which his genius had illustrated and his ambition endangered. Of the infatuation which led the Stuart family thus to deprive themselves of the counsels of the only man who was capable of directing them, at the most momentous crisis of their affairs, there cannot be better proof imagined than is furnished by the impartial testimony of the Duke of Berwick, the only man of capacity in the family. "One must have lost his reason," says he, "not to see the enormous mistake committed by King James in dismissing the only English-

54.
Fall of Bolingbroke at the court of the Pretender.

CHAP.
X.

1714.

man he had capable of managing his affairs ; for, whatever may be said by some persons of more passion than judgment, it is admitted by all England that there have been few greater ministers than Bolingbroke. He was born with splendid talents, which had raised him, at an early age, to the very highest employments ; he exerted great influence over the Tory party, and was, in fact, its soul. Could there, then, be a more lamentable weakness than to dismiss such a man, at the very time when he was most wanted, and when it was most essential not to make new enemies ? I was in part a witness how Bolingbroke acted for King James while he managed his affairs ; and I owe him the justice to say, that he left nothing undone that he could do : he moved heaven and earth to obtain supplies, but was always put off by the court of France.”¹

¹ Berwick's
Mem. 261,
262—edit.
Petitot.

55.
Trial and
acquittal of
Oxford.

Oxford did not gain in the end more than Bolingbroke, by the desertions of his duty to his Queen and country. Having, as already mentioned, boldly stayed at home and set his accusers at defiance, he was arrested on a charge of high treason, and high crimes and misdemeanours, and by a most flagrant and culpable delay of justice was detained two years in prison before he was brought to trial. The Whigs, at first in a body, cordially and unanimously supported the impeachment ; but time having produced the usual amount of schism in that party after their triumph, following on the accession of the Hanoverian family, some of his keenest enemies in the outset were converted, before the trial came on in the House of Peers, into secret friends. Walpole and Townsend, who had been removed from office, were the leaders of these malcontent Whigs, who combined with the Tories and Jacobites to obstruct the prosecution.

The charges of high treason were negatived in the outset unanimously, no prosecutor having appeared to insist on these charges ; but it was determined, by a majority of a hundred and six to thirty-eight, to proceed with the trial of the "other crimes and misdemeanours." The thirty-eight absented themselves, and he was unanimously acquitted, to the great disappointment of the Whigs, who took a very warm interest in the prosecution. It was said in after times that Marlborough joined with the malcontents among the Whigs to obstruct the prosecution, from a dread of Oxford revealing his correspondence in early life with King James after the Revolution. But this is disproved, by the fact of his having voted in every stage for the prosecution ; and by the still more decisive fact, that when the Pretender landed in Scotland, and published a list of the persons who were to be included in the proffered amnesty, Marlborough was specially exempted from it.¹

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Coxe's
Mem. of
Walpole,
c. 17; and
Marlb. vi.
350-352.

But the evil days were approaching for Marlborough also ; and he was destined to afford another example of the truth of the saying of Solon, that no one can be deemed really happy till the day of his death. It was through his family he was first pierced to the heart, on the 22d March 1714. His third daughter, the Countess of Bridgewater, was cut off after a short illness ; and hardly had he recovered from this domestic shock when his second daughter, the Countess of Sunderland, also died, on the 15th April in the same year, of a fever and inflammation in the lungs. Her loss was severely felt by both her parents, to whom she had long been endeared, not only by her beauty and fascination of manner, but by a rare union of those brilliant qualities

^{56.}
Deaths of
the Count-
ess of
Bridge-
water and
Countess of
Sunderland.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

with a sound judgment, a deep sense of religion, and a singular meekness and placidity of temper. Her heavenly state of mind may be judged of by a prayer which she composed and nightly addressed to the Supreme Being, when her husband was absent on his embassy to Vienna—one of the most beautiful and touching compositions in the English language. She had all her mother's beauty, and all her father's sweetness of disposition, and was in her twenty-ninth year when she died.¹ *

¹ Coxe, vi.
339-341.

57.
Marlbo-
rough is
struck with
palsy, and
his public
life ended.

Marlborough himself was not long of following his beloved relatives to the grave. He had long suffered under headaches and heat in the head, the well-known result of undue mental exertion, and the precursor of dissolution to many of the first and greatest of the human race. They proved so too truly to him. On the 28th May 1716, he was seized with a fit of palsy, so severe that it deprived him, for a time, alike of speech and resolution. He recovered, however, in a certain degree, and went to Bath for the benefit of the waters; and a gleam of returning light shone upon his mind when he visited Blenheim on the 18th October. He expressed great satisfaction at the survey of the

* "O most gracious and merciful Lord God, whose kingdom ruleth over all, who art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain on the broad sea, hear the voice of my prayer, now I cry unto Thee, on the behalf of him who is dearest to me. O Lord, at all times, and in all places, bless, preserve, and keep him, both in body and soul, from all adversities which may happen to him. In all danger, and under every temptation, be Thou still his almighty Protector unto his life's end; more especially I beseech Thee, at this time, to keep him in thy care, that no evil may befall him in the way that he goeth, but that he may be always in safety, under thy protection, from all perils, and return again in peace. O Thou who commandest the winds and waves, and they obey Thee, make them favourable to him in his voyages, both in his going out and his coming in; conduct him safely into the haven where he would be. O Lord, in whose hands is the breath of all

plan, which reminded him of his great achievements, and in which he had always felt so deep an interest; but when he saw, in one of the few rooms which were finished, a picture of himself at the battle of Blenheim, he turned away with a mournful air, with the words—"Something then, but now ——" On November 10th he was attacked by another stroke, more severe than the former, and his family hastened to pay the last duties, as they conceived, to their departing parent. The strength of his constitution, however, triumphed for a time even over this violent attack; but though he continued, contrary to his own wishes, in conformity with those of his friends, who needed the support of his great reputation, to hold office, and occasionally appeared in Parliament, yet his public career was at an end.¹

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¹ Cox, vi.
347, 348.

Conscious of his approaching end, and dreading the progressive decay of his faculties, he tendered, through Lord Sunderland, the resignation of all his employments; but the King, from a just respect for his great services, declined to receive it. He continued to attend the House of Lords, and occasionally served in committees; but he took no active part in any public

58.
His last
years and
death, June
16, 1722.

mankind, preserve that dear person in health and security, that no disorder from within, nor violence from without, may occasion pain and trouble to him; and when he is far off from me, let him find himself nigh unto Thee, through the benefits of thy saving presence and defence. O blessed Lord, I pray Thee, more especially for his sake, for those persons he leaves behind him, that no mischief may happen to them in this, that may occasion sorrow to him in a strange land; and let it be thy gracious will to prosper all his negotiations abroad, and make me, good Lord, thankful for these blessings; and grant we may live in love and peace together, till death shall make a yet longer separation—all which, in all humility of soul, I pray of Thee in the name, and for the sake of Jesus my Saviour. *Amen*, O Blessed Lord, *Amen*, *Amen*."—Coxe, vol. vi. p. 340-1.

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debate. He continued, however, regularly to attend to his duties as Commander-in-chief; and he voted, as already mentioned, for Oxford's impeachment, so far as his conduct in promoting the peace of Utrecht was concerned. His habits of life were perfectly domestic during the years which intervened to his death. Riding, and the society of his friends, constituted his chief recreation; and not unfrequently he played with his grandchildren at ombre and commerce. He was particularly attentive to their education and progress. He took the greatest delight in the improvements at Blenheim, and surveyed its rising magnificence, down to his death, with undiminished interest. A considerable addition was made to his fortune by the sagacity of the Duchess, who persuaded him to embark part of his funds in the South-Sea Scheme; but, foreseeing the crash which was approaching, she sold out so opportunely that, instead of losing, she gained £100,000 by the transaction. On the 27th November 1721 he made his last appearance in the House of Lords; but in June 1722 he was again attacked with paralysis so violently that he lay for some days nearly motionless, though in perfect possession of his faculties. To a question from the Duchess, whether he heard the prayers read as usual at night, on the 15th June, in his apartment, he replied, "Yes; and I joined in them." These were his last words. On the morning of the 16th he sank rapidly, and calmly breathed his last at four o'clock, in the seventy-second year of his age.¹

¹ Ledyard, iii. 496.
Coxe, vi. 374-383.
Hist. de Marl. iii. 518, 519.

59.
And funeral, June 28, 1722.

Envy is generally extinguished by death, because the object of it has ceased to stand in the way of those who feel it. Marlborough's funeral obsequies were celebrated

with uncommon magnificence, and all ranks and parties joined in doing him honour. His body lay in state for several days at Marlborough House, and crowds flocked together from all the three kingdoms to witness the imposing ceremony of his funeral, which was performed with the utmost magnificence, on the 28th June. The procession was opened by a long array of military, among whom were General, now Lord, Cadogan, and many other officers who had suffered and bled in his cause. Long files of heralds, officers-at-arms, and pursuivants followed, bearing banners emblazoned with his armorial achievements, among which appeared in uncommon lustre the standard of Woodstock, exhibiting the arms of France on the cross of St George. In the centre of the cavalcade was an open car, bearing the coffin which contained his mortal remains, surmounted by a suit of complete armour, adorned with plumes, military trophies, and heraldic achievements. On the sides, shields were affixed, containing emblematic representations of the battles he had gained, and the towns he had taken, surmounted by the words "*Bello hæc et plura.*" Blenheim was there, and Schellenberg, Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet; Ruremonde and Liege, Menin and Dendermonde, Antwerp and Brussels, Ostend and Ghent, Tournay and Lille, Mons and Bouchain, Bethune, St Venant, and Aire. The number, and the recollections with which they were fraught, made the English ashamed of the manner in which they had used the hero who had filled the world with his renown.¹

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¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
521, 522.
Coxe, vi.
386.

The Duke of Montague, his son-in-law, who acted as chief mourner, was supported by the Earls of Sunderland

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1714.

60.

His place of
interment
in West-
minster
Abbey, and
at last at
Blenheim.

and Godolphin. Eight dukes and four other earls bore the pall. The procession was closed by a long array of the carriages of the nobility and gentry, including those of the King and the Prince of Wales. The cavalcade moved from Marlborough House, where he died, along St James's Park to Hyde Park Corner, and thence by Piccadilly and Pall Mall, by Charing Cross, to Westminster Abbey. Immense crowds filled the streets where the procession moved along; the very roofs of the houses were thronged with spectators. The Horse and Foot Guards formed part of the pageant in their splendid uniforms; but a yet more moving spectacle was afforded by the numerous veterans, most of them now in plain clothes, but whose service in the field might be known by their uncovered heads, and the tears which trickled down their cheeks, as their beloved chief was borne to his last resting-place. The body was received at the west door by the dignitaries of the cathedral in their splendid habiliments, and the venerable pile blazed with tapers and torches in every quarter.

"Through the courts at deep midnight the torches are gleaming,
In the proudly-arched chapel the banners are beaming;
Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a chief of the people should fall."

The funeral service, beginning with the words "I am the resurrection and the life," was read with impressive solemnity by Bishop Atterbury, and at its close, the Garter-King-at-Arms, after reciting the titles of the deceased, pronounced the words, "Thus it has pleased Almighty God to take out of this transitory world, into His mercy, the most high, mighty, noble Prince, John Duke of Marlborough." The body was lowered into

the grave, in the vault at the east end of the tomb of Henry VII. ; but that was not its final resting-place. It was afterwards removed to the chapel of Blenheim, where it was finally deposited in a splendid mausoleum, erected by the pious care of the Duchess. But the traveller who visits that sacred fane, and casts his eyes on the monuments of a nation's gratitude which surround it, will give it a wider mausoleum, and pronounce the well-known words—

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"Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice."¹

The Duke of Marlborough, during his long and splendid career, accumulated a very large fortune, the result partly of the deserved munificence of his sovereign in the days when her favour lasted, and partly of the great emoluments which in his day belonged to the generals at the head of armies. The time had not then arrived when popular jealousy was to starve down the remuneration of public servants to the lowest point consistent with the discharge of their duty, and when a man who had his fortune to make, and wished to leave his family independent, was obliged to enter the service of a merchant or a manufacturer, and not that of his country. He left in land and money about £40,000 a-year. His will, which was made in November 1720, provided amply for all his relatives. To the Duchess, whom he had ever loved with the most passionate devotion, he left a jointure of £15,000 a-year. The sum of £50,000 was bequeathed to her, to aid in completing the works at Blenheim. The residue of his fortune was settled on his eldest daughter, Henrietta, Countess of Godolphin, and her heirs-male, with a reversionary entail on the heirs-male of his other daughters in suc-

¹ Coxe, vi.
385-387.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
528, 529.

61.
Marlbo-
rough's for-
tune and
will.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Coxe, vi.
389, 390.

62.
Descent of
the title
and estates.

cession. To Lord Godolphin he assigned an annuity of £5000 a-year, if he survived his wife; and to Lord Rialton, his eldest son, one of £3000 per annum. His executors were directed to obtain an act of Parliament, settling on the future representatives of his titles all the landed estates which they might purchase with the interest of his personal estate.¹

On the decease of the Duke, the title and estates descended to his eldest daughter, Lady Godolphin, who became Duchess of Marlborough. That line, however, became extinct in 1733, by the demise of her only son, the Marquis of Blandford, without issue. The title and estates, in terms of the entail, therefore devolved on the Sunderland branch, the next in the order of succession, from whom the present noble family of Marlborough is descended. Henrietta, second Duchess of Marlborough, left two daughters, the eldest of whom married Thomas Holles, Duke of Newcastle; the second, Thomas, Duke of Leeds, from whom the present and sixth Duke of Leeds is descended. Mary, the fourth daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, who married the Duke of Montague, had three sons—who all died in infancy—and three daughters, Eleanor, Mary, and Isabella. Eleanor died unmarried; Isabella married the Duke of Manchester, and was celebrated as one of the greatest beauties of her day. By the Duke she had no issue; but, after his decease, she married Edward Hussey, Esq., who was afterwards created Earl of Beaulieu, which line is now extinct. Her daughter married Lord Bolingbroke, and thus united the blood of these rivals in politics in that noble family.¹ Mary, the youngest daughter of John, Duke of Montague, married George, fourth Earl of Cardigan, who in 1766

¹ Coxe, vi.
391, 392.
Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
547.

was created Duke of Montague. Their only son died in 1771, unmarried ; but their surviving daughter, Elizabeth, having married Henry, Duke of Buccleuch, became the parent of a numerous line of descendants, who united the blood of Monmouth with that of Marlborough in that noble family.

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1714.

At the battle of Fontenoy in 1745, when the English and French Guards approached each other, three officers of the former stepped out of the ranks, and, taking off their hats, exclaimed, — “Messieurs de la Garde Française, tirez !” The French commander, the Comte d’Anteroche, replied, “Messieurs de la Garde Anglaise, tirez vous-même, nous reponderons.” The English fired accordingly, and “the discharge brought down,” says the French historian, “six hundred of the French Guards, and annihilated another regiment. Thus the regard of reciprocal politeness preceded the most frightful carnage ; and the example was afforded of two rival nations preceding a bloody action by an example of generosity, with which the Greeks and the Romans would not have failed to ennoble their history.” One of these three English was Lord Albemarle ; the second, Captain Charles Hay ; and the third, Captain Churchill, son of a natural son of the Duke of Marlborough. If experience has shown that intellectual powers generally come from the mother’s, it tells equally that the heroic come from the father’s side.¹ *

63.
Anecdote of
a descen-
dant of
Marlbo-
rough at the
battle of
Fontenoy.

¹ Hist. de
Marlb. iii.
546.

A very imperfect idea would be formed of the character of the Duke of Marlborough, if it were rested

* Coxe says that the officer was the grandson of Charles Churchill, the brother of Marlborough. At all events, he was of the same blood and parental descent.—Coxe, vi. 392.

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X.

1714.

64.
Remark-
able kind-
ness of dis-
position in
Marlbo-
rough.

solely on his public actions, great and glorious as they were. It is in private life that the feelings of the heart are fully proved, and there his disposition appeared in the brightest colours. He was the kindest and most affectionate of men ; and in addition to these feelings, in himself he possessed in the highest degree the courtesy and benignity of manner which most strongly awaken similar feelings in others. He won the hearts, not only of men of his own disposition, but of the most opposite characters and selfish propensities. All yielded to the gentle atmosphere which impregnated the very air he breathed. The ambitious Sunderland, the unimagina- tive Godolphin, were alike influenced by it. He was not merely respected, but loved by his friends ; and loved for his own sake, irrespective of the fame he had acquired, or the influence he wielded. It was the charm of his manner, the gentleness of his temper, the suavity of his disposition, which won every heart, as it does in every age with those who are blessed with such a heavenly temperament.¹

¹ Coxe, vi.
395. Thom-
son's Duch-
ess of Marl-
borough, ii.
343.

65.
His charac-
ter as a
husband,
father, and
friend.

This gentle and affectionate disposition appeared in all the relations of life, and in none so much so as in those in which it is usually least conspicuous. If it be true that no man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre, certainly no man approached the character so nearly as the Duke of Marlborough. In all the domestic relations of life—the true test of the feelings of the heart—he stood pre-eminent. To the Duchess he was inspired through life, not only with the affection of a husband, but with the ardour of a lover ; and the equanimity of his temper was constantly evinced by the admirable manner in which he bore her caprice, vehemence, and instability,

which, despite her sincere devotion to and great admiration for him, were sometimes directed against himself. His affection to his children was warm and steady, and evinced not only by words, but deeds. He settled liberally upon them on their marriage, and paid down their portions early in life, when his own fortune was far from considerable—the best proof that can perhaps be given of an affectionate feeling, for there are few affections, even of the strongest, which can stand the money test. Nor was his kindness confined to his immediate relations; it extended also to his remoter connections. They were all promoted by his influence, or enriched by his beneficence; and every one, in particular, of the Masham family, who effected his downfall, had been rescued from poverty and placed in affluence by his exertions.¹

Marlborough's graces of manner and fascination of deportment are well known, and have been deservedly celebrated by Lord Chesterfield, himself one of the greatest masters in them that ever existed. No one acquainted with the world need be told that this charm of manner is frequently the accompaniment of a very different disposition—that egotism and selfishness are too often veiled by a polished and insinuating exterior. But if hypocrisy, in a world generally selfish, is so often the homage which vice pays to virtue, it was not so with Marlborough. In him it was the reflection of a sweet disposition, an unruffled temper, a benevolent mind: the spirit shone forth in the manner, as the genius does in the eyes. It was the same to all; as much so to the humblest dependant as to the most haughty potentate. It was one great cause of the extraordinary success with which his measures were attended, and the unbounded sway

CHAP.

X.

1714.

¹ Coxe, vi.
395. Cow-
per's Diary.
Chester-
field's Let-
ters, iii. 287.

66.
His suavity
of manners
to all, and
its great
effects on the
Alliance.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

which he exercised over the discordant and selfish heads of the Alliance. It at once ranged the generals and chiefs of his heterogeneous army in willing obedience around the standards of a chief whom they not only obeyed as a commander, but loved as a man, and induced the sovereigns and their ministers to become the willing instruments of the great designs which he had in contemplation. He often had great difficulties to contend with in smoothing down the asperities and stilling the jealousies of rival cabinets, when at a distance ; but he never had any in reconciling them, when he could leave his headquarters and be personally present at their courts. He himself said to M. de Torcy that the holding together of the Alliance for so long a period, so that so many different powers acted as one man, was a miracle which could be ascribed only to Heaven. It was indeed a miracle, but the miracle was found in the disposition of his own breast.

67.
His human-
ity in war,
and care of
his soldiers.

The benevolence of heart and suavity of disposition which was so conspicuous in Marlborough's manner, appeared not less clearly in the humane and temperate manner in which he conducted the operations of war. That he was frequently obliged to do severe and desolating acts, is to say only that he was the general at the head of a great army ; for unhappily war, which deals in human destruction, cannot be carried on but by a frequent recurrence to such measures. But no man suffered more under the cruel necessity which sometimes commanded acts of severity, few made such efforts to evade them, and none, when the necessity had passed, did more to heal the wounds which had been inflicted, and assuage the suffering that had been occasioned.

The military writers on the Continent—in particular Dumont, and the biographer to whom Napoleon committed the task of writing his life—celebrate him as the true author of the humane system of modern warfare ; that system which, equally removed from the desolating cruelty of savages and the interested courtesy of feudal times, sees in a prisoner neither a foe which is to be destroyed nor a captive who is to be ransomed, but a brother who is to be succoured. His humanity, after the battle was over, was always as conspicuous as his skill in providing for victory. His first care was to tend the wounded and get them securely placed in hospitals, without distinction of friend or foe ; and he often, in particular at Malplaquet, divided the whole of his own money at the time in his possession among the officers who had been made prisoners among his enemies.¹

CHAP.
X.
1714.

¹ Capefigue,
Hist. de
Louis XIV.
vi. 125.

The same disposition of mind rendered him capable of bearing, with equal temper and equanimity, the numerous crosses which he met with in his career, and the flagrant injustice and ingratitude which signalised its close. During his campaigns, he was constrained on many occasions, and those, in general, the most important, to see victory snatched from his grasp by the jealousy of the generals placed under his orders, or the treachery and incapacity of the Dutch deputies placed as viceroys over him ; but the disappointment, though keenly felt, never betrayed him into an angry expression, not merely in public, but in his most secret and confidential correspondence. At the close of his career he was assailed by all the arts which malignity could suggest or falsehood invent, in order to discredit his actions, and expose his character to obloquy ; but they never

68.
His equanimity when assailed by his enemies and dismissed from office.

CHAP.

X.

1714.

betrayed him into an expression unworthy of his character, or beneath his reputation. Though peculiarly sensitive to, and perhaps unreasonably hurt by, the libels with which he was assailed, he made no attempt to defend himself, except against charges in Parliament, and was content to let his deeds speak for themselves, his character vindicate itself. This lofty disposition was one great cause of the increase of the libels which appeared against him, and of the unjust obloquy which so long hung over his memory ; for he disdained to explain many things which appeared at first sight suspicious, but which, when their real nature was disclosed, redounded most to his credit. Thus he bore with patience the charges so frequently brought against him of prosecuting the war for his own advantage, and omitting many opportunities of bringing it to a successful issue : and his reason was, that the first could not be refuted without violating the diplomatic secrets which he was bound to conceal : and the last, without disclosing the incapacity of the officers under his command, or the obstacles thrown in his way by the deputies appointed to control his conduct. He was equally proof against the malice of Slangenberg, the ingratitude of Mrs Masham, and the malevolence of Harley and Bolingbroke.

69.
His magnanimity in
judging of
others.

Marlborough had one great quality, perhaps the most decisive mark of a noble mind—viz., generosity in judging and speaking of others. He was utterly destitute of the envy, jealousy, and littleness which unhappily so often disfigure and disgrace minds in other respects the most splendidly endowed. Incapable of harbouring such feelings in his own breast, he was equally so of

suspecting their existence in the bosoms of others ; and the opposition which so long thwarted, and at last over-
turned him, was in a great degree owing to this lofty indifference. He could not be brought to believe that Harley and Bolingbroke, whom he had introduced into office, and raised to distinction, could be in league against him : he warmed the serpents in his bosom till they stung him to death. His warm friendship for, and cordial admiration of, Prince Eugene, which was so fully and fondly returned, is perhaps the most remarkable feature in the character of each, and the most characteristic of the elevated and magnanimous turn of both their minds. It is sufficiently rare to see the friendship of an Orestes and Pylades in private life, even among those who have been born and bred together. But to find it existing between heroes who are rivals in glory and associates in undertakings, and who have been introduced to each other, for the first time, in middle life, when each was at the zenith of his reputation, is so rare that, in the whole history of mankind, it is not to be found in any other persons similarly situated.

No charges were so generally brought against Marlborough, during his life, and have been so generally credited since his death, as those of having prolonged the war for his own advantage, and of having been parsimonious and avaricious in his disposition. Yet no charges were not only more unfounded, but more directly the reverse of the truth. So far from desiring to prolong the war, his whole efforts were directed to a course of operations, generally thwarted, which would at once have terminated it ; and there is scarcely one of his private letters, during his long career, which does not speak of his anxious

CHAP.

X.

1714.

70.

False im-
putation
against him
of being ad-
verse to
peace and
fond of
money.

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X.

1714.

longings for peace and repose. He was not averse to peace in general, but to that kind of peace which the Tories supported, which sacrificed all the objects for which the war had been undertaken. Even during his life, those who knew him best were aware how little the alleged love of money really affected his character. "He was so very great a man," said Bolingbroke, "that I forgot he had that vice." But, in truth, he had not the vice. He had the prudent habits which generally distinguish those who have their fortune to make; and he incurred the reputation for love of money which those in general do, among the great, who are not running in debt. Mankind can seldom bear success in their equals in two different lines at once: they can tolerate fortune in a merchant and fame in a general, but fortune in a famed general is utterly insupportable. In great things, however, he had the same magnanimity in money transactions that he had in everything else. He repeatedly refused the government of the Netherlands, with its emoluments of £60,000 a-year, lest the appointment should distract the harmony of the Alliance; he spent £100,000 on Marlborough House, in London; he bequeathed £50,000 to complete the buildings at Blenheim. His liberality to his children and relations was unbounded; his economy was all on himself. Nor was it confined to his relations only. On one occasion, a young man, an entire stranger, came to him for a commission, and when asked for the money, blushing confessed he had it not to produce.¹ "I cannot," said the Duke, "give you the commission for nothing, but here are the means of purchasing it," presenting him, at the same time, with a cheque for a thousand

¹ Warton's
Essay on
Pope, ii.
303. Thom-
son's Duch-
ess, ii. 349,
350.

pounds. We recommend his detractors to go and do likewise.

Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, long survived her illustrious husband, and died in 1744, at the advanced age of eighty-four. Her brilliant talents, great fortune, and undiminished beauty, rendered her, long after his death, the object of impassioned admiration to a variety of suitors. One of the most ardent of these was Thomas, Earl of Coningsby, who had been a devoted swain even before Marlborough was committed to the tomb, but whose passion, even though his correspondence with her had long been on the hazardous confines of friendship and love, had never exceeded the limits of platonic attachment. His letters often spoke of his "dearest, dearest Lady Marlborough," but his actions had never transgressed the bounds of decorum; and the reputation of the Duchess through life was never assailed by the breath of calumny.* Another suitor was the Duke of Somerset, who also kept up an amatory correspondence with the Duchess in the most impassioned terms, when she had already reached the advanced years of sixty-two, and he that of sixty-five but, like Coningsby, was never permitted to aspire to the honour of her hand. She lived during the remainder of her life chiefly at Windsor Lodge, superintending the works at Blenheim, and completing the splendid undertakings there, in which her husband had taken

CHAP.

X.

1714.

71.

Subsequent
life and
death of the
Duchess of
Marlbo-
rough.

* "But I live in hopes that the great and glorious Creator of the world, who does and must direct all things, will direct you to make me the happiest man upon the face of the earth, and enable me to make my dearest, dearest Lady Marlborough, as she is the best and wisest, the happiest of all women." — *Lord Coningsby to Duchess of Marlborough*, Nov. 20, 1722; COXE MS., vol. xliii. 71; and THOMSON, ii. 367.

CHAP.
X.

1714.

¹ Coxe, vi.
392, 393.
Thomson's
Duchess of
Marlbo-
rough, ii.
360-363.

such interest, and great part of which was finished by funds advanced by herself for that purpose. To a serious proposal of the Duke of Somerset, then in his sixty-fifth year, she replied with a worthy spirit,—“That if he was the emperor of the world, she would not permit him to succeed in that heart which had been devoted to JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.”¹

CHAPTER XI.

THE PEACE OF UTRECHT.

THE wars in which the Duke of Marlborough was engaged were not contests produced merely by the ambition of kings, or the rivalry of ministers. They were not waged for the acquisition of a province, or the capture of a fortress. They were not incurred, like those of Frederick, for the gain of Silesia, or impelled to, like those of Charles XII., by the thirst for glory. Great moral principles were involved in the contest. The League of Augsburg, which terminated in the peace of Ryswick, and first put a bridle on the ambition of France, was the direct and immediate consequence of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the exile of the persecuted Protestants by Louis XIV. The War of the Succession arose unavoidably from his selfish ambition, and desire to appropriate the whole magnificent spoils of the Spanish monarchy, which he had won by diplomatic astuteness, for the aggrandisement of the house of Bourbon. But, in addition to this, the great interests of religious freedom and national independence were at stake in the struggle.

Freedom of thought, emancipation from Romish tyranny, liberty in the choice of worship, the preaching

CHAP.

XI.

1714.

1.
Moral character of the Duke of Marlborough's wars.

CHAP.

XI.

1714.

2.

Opposite interests and causes for which the parties contended.

of the Gospel to the poor, were borne aloft on Marlborough's banners ; national independence, death to the Bourbons, hatred to France, were inscribed on those of Eugene. The Church of Rome, indeed, had few more faithful subjects than the house of Hapsburg ; but dread of the ambition of Louis XIV., and the glittering prospect of the Spanish succession, had brought her Catholic sovereigns into a close union with the Protestants of the north ; and the admirable temper and judgment of the English and Austrian chiefs kept their troops in a state of concord and amity rarely witnessed in the best cemented alliances. Feudal honour, chivalrous loyalty, the unity of the Church, were the principles which had roused the armies and directed the councils of Louis XIV. The exaltation of France, the glory of their sovereign, the spoils of Spain, awakened the ambition of its government, and animated the spirit of its people. The influence of these opposite principles was felt not only in the council, but in the field—not only in the minister's cabinet, but in the soldier's tent. Divine service, after the Protestant form, was regularly performed, morning and evening, in every regiment of Marlborough's army ; they prepared for battle by taking the sacrament ; they terminated their victories by thanksgiving. The armies of Louis, in a gay and gallant spirit, set out for the conflict. If any ecclesiastic appeared to bless their arms, it was the gorgeous priests of the ancient faith ; they struck rather for the honour of their country, or the glory of their sovereign, than the unity in Church and State on which he was so strongly bent ; and went to battle dreaming more of the splendour of Versailles or the smiles of beauty, than of the dogmas of religion or the crusade of the Church of Rome.

As the principles and passions which animated the contending parties were thus opposite, proportionately great was the peril to the cause alike of religious freedom and of European independence, if the coalition had not proved successful. That no danger was to be apprehended to these from its triumph has been decisively proved by the event ; the Allies were victorious, and both of them have been preserved. But very different would have been the results, if a power, animated by the ambition, guided by the fanaticism, and directed by the ability, of the cabinet of Louis XIV., had gained the ascendancy in Europe. Beyond all question, a universal despotic dominion would have been established over the bodies, a cruel spiritual thralldom over the minds, of men. France and Spain united under Bourbon princes, and in a close family alliance—the Empire of Charlemagne with that of Charles V.—the power which revoked the Edict of Nantes, and perpetrated the massacre of St Bartholomew, with that which banished the Moriscoes, and established the Inquisition—would have proved irresistible, and beyond example destructive to the best interests of mankind.

The Protestants might have been driven, like the Pagan heathens of old by the son of Pepin, beyond the Elbe ; the Stuart race, and with them Romish ascendancy, might have been re-established in England ; the fire lighted by Latimer and Ridley might have been extinguished in blood ; and the energy breathed by religious freedom into the Anglo-Saxon race might have expired. The destinies of the world would have been changed. Europe, instead of a variety of independent states, whose mutual hostility kept alive courage, while their national rivalry stimulated talent, would have sunk into the slumber attendant on universal dominion. The

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3.

Magnitude
of the danger
which
threatened
Europe, if
France had
proved successful.

4.

Results
which might
have followed
the triumph
of
France.

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never so accelerated as by the triumph of republican bayonets. William III. was the head of a revolutionary dynasty, but he established the government of Great Britain on a far more aristocratic basis during the succeeding century than it had ever before attained. Louis XIV. was the leader of a crusade of the faithful against the Protestant party, but he bequeathed a century of irreligion to France, which ended in the overthrow of its government. The Committee of Public Salvation, wielding the forces of the Revolution, established a centralised military despotism in France far exceeding anything dreamt of by Richelieu or Louvois, and which has never since been shaken off in that country. The spread of political power, the popularisation of social institutions, have never been so rapid in Great Britain as during the thirty years which immediately succeeded the glorious termination of the anti-revolutionary war.

7.
Important
difference in
the parties
by whom
the war was
opposed in
the times of
Marlbo-
rough and
of Napo-
leon.

But from this ranging of the contending parties, in name at least, on opposite sides, and the important fact of the legitimate dynasty having been displaced by a revolutionary monarch on the throne of England, there arose a most important difference between the respective parties who opposed the war commencing in 1679, and that which began in 1793. The war which terminated with the treaty of Ryswick was waged by William, himself the Louis Philippe of the younger branch of the Stuart dynasty ; that of the Succession was headed by Anne, his successor on the revolutionary throne. It was carried on for the freedom of conscience and liberty of worship, and supported by the whole strength of the Whig aristocracy, and the whole vehemence of the Protestant fervour. Hence the enemies of the war, the Opposition to the Government, naturally espoused the

other side. The Tory and High Church party gradually became estranged from the Government, and at length openly came into hostility with it, in consequence of the continued increase which the prosecution of the war gave to the influence of its opponents, and the dreadful and interminable dangers with which it seemed to threaten the finances of the country. Thus the position of parties became precisely the reverse of what they subsequently were during the war with revolutionary France; and yet both at heart were actuated by the same motives. The Tories opposed the War of the Succession and decried Marlborough's victories, as warmly as the Whigs resisted the contest with France, and strove to lessen Wellington's fame, a century later. Both put forth public principle and the interest of the nation as the ostensible grounds of their conduct; but both in secret were actuated, perhaps unconsciously, by different and more pressing motives. The Tories opposed the war with Louis XIV. because it tended to confirm their opponents in power, and to postpone, if not destroy, their hopes of restoring the exiled family. The Whigs opposed the war with Napoleon, because it was waged against a power which at least began with the principles of democracy, and because they expected its successful issue would, for perhaps more than a generation, confirm the Tories in possession of the reins of government.

Political parties, and the alliances of cabinets in Europe, had been long actuated and regulated by these principles, which had in an especial manner become predominant since the terrible conflict of the Great Rebellion in England. All the foreign alliances of Charles II. had in secret been suggested by jealousy of the republican party, from which his family had

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1714.

8.
State of the
opposite
parties in
Great Bri-
tain since
the Great
Rebellion.

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sustained such grievous injuries at home. French mistresses, the charms of the Duchess of Portsmouth, were not disregarded by the amorous monarch; but the chief motive of his conduct was a desire to extinguish the Puritan faction and the Protestant faith in his dominions. It was an article of the secret treaty between Charles and Louis XIV., that the republican forms of government as existing in Holland should be superseded by a hereditary monarchy in the person of the Stadtholder and his family, and that the English monarch should as soon as prudent do what was possible for the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in Great Britain. These social and political divisions, naturally arising from the vehement contests of the seventeenth century, derived additional strength from the expulsion of the ancient dynasty, and the successful result of the Revolution of 1688 in this country. Personal animosity and party ambition were immediately added to the flames of political hostility. It was felt by all that the change of dynasty had been brought about by many disgraceful acts of treachery in the leaders of the movement, as well as by the generous indignation of the nation at attempts to enslave them. The bitterness of lost influence, the recollection of shattered power, were added to the broad lines of political distinction; and a cast-down party, which had generous feelings and profound attachments to rest upon, ere long gathered strength from the very circumstances, in the external condition of the nation, which to appearance had established the power of their opponents on an immovable foundation.¹

¹ Capefigue,
 Hist. de
 Louis XIV.
 ii. 167.

The Revolution had been brought about by a coalition of parties, arising from the general feeling of

unbearable oppression experienced by the nation. The Tories had joined in it as cordially as the Whigs; the High Church party as much as the Dissenters. It began with sending the seven bishops to the Tower; it was ended by the cheers of the troops at their acquittal on Hounslow Heath. Bolingbroke has well expressed the views which induced the Tory party and ancient Cavaliers of the realm to take part in this great movement, and there is no reason to believe that he was insincere in what he said. "Many," says he, "of the most distinguished Tories, some of those who carried highest the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, were engaged in it, and the whole nation was ripe for it. The Whigs were zealous in the same cause, but their zeal was not such as I think it had been some years before, a zeal without knowledge. I mean it was better tempered and more prudently conducted. Though the King was not the better for his experience, parties were. Both saw their errors. The Tories stopped short in pursuit of a bad principle; the Whigs reformed the abuse of a good one. Both had sacrificed their country to their party; both on this occasion sacrificed their party to their country. The cause of liberty was no longer made the cause of a party, by being set on such a bottom as one party alone approved. The Revolution was plainly designed to restore and secure our government, ecclesiastical and civil, on true foundations; and whatever might happen to the King, there was no room to apprehend any change in the constitution. The republican whimsies, indeed, that reigned in the days of usurpation and confusion, still prevailed among some of that party. But this leaven was so near worn out that it could neither corrupt, nor seem any longer to

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9.

The union
of parties
had brought
about the
Revolution.

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¹ Dissertation on Parties—Bolingbroke's Works, ii. 125.

10.
Dangers which flowed from the Revolution. The funding system.

corrupt, the mass of the Whig party. That party never had been Republicans or Presbyterians, any more than they had been Quakers ; any more than the Tory party had been Papists when, notwithstanding their aversion to Popery, they were undeniably under the accidental influence of Popish councils. But even the appearances were now rectified. The Revolution was a fire which purged off the dross of both parties ; and, the dross being purged off, they appeared to be the same metal, and answered the same standard.”¹

But it is a dangerous thing even for the best founded causes of dissatisfaction, to overturn an established government. Such a step generally remedies the immediate evils which produced the discontent, but it does so only by introducing a host of others, often still more injurious, and which become by the triumph of the first convulsion wholly irremovable. No nation ever had juster cause for dispossessing a sovereign than England had in 1688 ; for James was striving at once and by force to subvert the civil liberties, and change the established religion, of his people. Yet from this just and necessary change, as *all* parties then felt it to be, was soon found to flow a series of causes and effects which induced a host of evils so serious and appalling, that the contemporary age was seized with consternation at their magnitude, and the results of them will be felt to the latest generation in Great Britain. The first effect which immediately followed was the commencement of the great war with France, which, beginning in 1689, continued, with a cessation only of five years, till 1713. England was now the head of the Protestant and independent league ; and upon her fell the weight of the contest with Romish

and despotic France. The finances of Great Britain, as they were managed in former times, could never have sustained the cost of such a war for a tenth part of the time. But expense now seemed to be no obstacle to the Government. A new engine of surpassing strength had been discovered for extracting capital out of a country; and the able statesmen who had it in their hands felt it to be not less serviceable in consolidating the internal power than in meeting the external expenses of the new dynasty. The revenue at the dethronement of James II. was only £2,000,000 a-year, a sum not equal to three months' expenditure of the war; and long experience had proved the extreme difficulty of getting the people, even under the most pressing emergencies of Government, to make any addition to the public burdens. But William brought with him from Holland the secret of the *Funding System*. He showed the nation what may be done by forestalling the resources of future years in the present, by pledging the industry of a people to its capital. It was this marvellous discovery, then new to the world, which at once occasioned the successes which signalised the external government of the Revolution, and engendered the internal discontent which all but produced its downfall.

When this system first began, the nation was not sensible of the important consequences to which it could lead. They thought that it could only be a temporary expedient, and that though perhaps it might lead to a few millions being unnecessarily added to the national debt, yet that would be all. Though from the first, accordingly, its progress was viewed with a jealous eye by the thinking few, it made but little impression upon the unthinking many before the peace of Ryswick.

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 1714.

11.
 General
 terrors it
 excited in
 Great Bri-
 tain.

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1714.

But when the War of the Succession began in 1702, and continued without intermission, and attended by daily increasing expenditure for ten years, the apprehensions of a large part of the nation became excessive. At the Revolution, the national debt was £661,000 ; by the year 1710 it exceeded £50,000,000 sterling. Though this sum may seem inconsiderable to us who have become accustomed to the much greater debts which have since been contracted, yet it appeared prodigious to a people then beginning to learn for the first time to what burden the finances of a nation may, by the funding system, be subjected. It was a terrible thing to think that in twenty years the public debt had been augmented *eighty-fold*,—that in that short time it had come to amount to *twenty-five* times the revenue of the nation at its commencement. And it had in reality become a formidable burden, as compared with the resources of the state even at that time ; for the public income, which had been two millions at the dethronement of James, had only risen to £5,691,000 at the death of Anne, while the debt was £54,000,000—being nearly ten times its amount, and about half in proportion to the national revenue of what it is at this time.

12.
Bolingbroke's account of its dangers.

Bolingbroke has left us the following vivid picture of the apprehensions with which, in the latter years of the War of the Succession, the minds of men were filled on this dismal subject : “It is impossible to look back without grief on the necessary and unavoidable consequences of this establishment, or without indignation on that mystery of iniquity which hath been raised upon it, and carried on by means of it. Who can answer that a scheme which oppresses the farmer, ruins the

manufacturer, breaks the merchant, discourages industry, and reduces fraud to a system ; which drains continually a portion of our national wealth away to foreigners, and draws most perniciously the rest of that immense property that was diffused among thousands into the pockets of a few—who can answer that such a scheme will always endure ? The whole art of stock-jobbing, the whole mystery of iniquity mentioned above, arises from this establishment, and is employed about the funds ; and the main-springs which turn or may turn the artificial wheel of credit, and make the paper estates that are fastened to it rise or fall, lurk behind the veil of the treasury. That luxury which began to spread after the restoration of Charles II. hath increased ever since, from the growth of wealth among the stock-jobbers from this system. Nothing can be more certain than this, that national luxury and national poverty may in time establish national prostitution. The immense wealth of particular men is a circumstance which always attends national poverty, and is in a great measure the cause of it. We may already apply to our country what Sallust makes Cato say of the state of Rome, and I wish we could apply no more :—‘ *Pro his nos habemus luxuriam ; publicè egestatem, privatim opulentiam.*’ Public want and private wealth abound in all declining states.”¹

What rendered this system peculiarly alarming was the simultaneous development of a new, and apparently interminable system of government, by which it was to be carried on. The Stuarts had tried to reign by prerogative ; and as one monarch had lost his head and another his crown in the attempt, the friends of freedom flattered themselves that the liberties of the nation

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1714.

¹ Dissertation on Parties—Bolingbroke's Works, iii. 298, 299.

13. General corruption which was induced in the country.

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were now established on a foundation which no future sovereign would attempt to shake. But the accession of William soon showed that there are other ways of managing a people than by open force. The Stuarts had failed because they had been bred under monarchical habits, and had no other ideas of government than those of prerogative and power. Experience had not taught them the secret, so well known to the Roman Emperor, of veiling authority under the *name* of freedom, and disarming opposition by attending to the *interests* of its leaders. William brought from the commercial republic of Holland, where they had been long practised and were perfectly understood, a thorough knowledge of both these important state secrets. Introduced by Parliament, having no legitimate title to the throne, standing solely on the choice of the nation, he was careful in all his measures not to run counter either in form or substance to the power which had raised him to supreme power. Everything originated with the legislature. The House of Commons stood forth in appearance as the ruler of the state. But then he contrived, by a simple expedient, to rule the House of Commons. The wars in which he was of necessity engaged, the loans which they rendered unavoidable, and which the commercial wealth of the nation enabled it to advance, and the great increase in the general expenditure of the Exchequer,—all conspired to place a vast and unprecedented amount of patronage in the hands of Government. This was systematically directed to buy off opposition in Parliament, and secure a majority in the constituencies. Corruption in every possible form, from the highest to the lowest, was employed in all parts of Great Britain, especially among the urban electors ; and

with such success that almost every measure of Government passed without difficulty through both Houses of Parliament. The nation had shaken off the prerogatives of the Crown, but they had fallen under the domination of its influence. The gold of the Exchequer was found to be more powerful than the penalties of the Star Chamber; and the last state of the realm was, in this view, worse than the first.

If this enormous increase in the public debt, under the influence of the funding system, awakened the apprehensions of the thoughtful, not less did the unbounded spread of corruption excite the indignation of the virtuous part of the nation. The first might embarrass the revenue, and cripple the resources of the people; but this threatened to sap the foundations of their prosperity, by undermining their virtue. Bolingbroke, whose genius, however brilliant, seldom did more than reflect the ideas of that part of the empire which constituted his section of the community, has left the following account of the sentiments with which this new and demoralising system of influence was regarded by the sturdy English or country party: "As the means of influencing by prerogative and of governing by force were considered to be increased formerly upon every addition to the power of the Crown, so are the means of influencing by money, and of governing by corruption, to be considered as increased now, upon that increase of power which hath accrued to the Crown by the new constitution of the revenue since the Revolution. Not only the means of corrupting are increased on the part of the Crown, but the facility of employing these means with success is increased on the part of the people, on the part of the electors, and the part of the elected.

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14.

Bolingbroke's account of the general indignation at this demoralising system.

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The power of the Crown to corrupt, and the proneness of the people to be corrupted, must continue to increase on the same principles, until a stop be put to the growing wealth and power of the one, and the growing depravity of the other. The Ministers, though never so weak, are always impudent enough to act, and able enough to get frequent supplies on national pretences for private purposes. The consequences of this are manifold, for, the more money passes through their hands, the more opportunities they have of gain; and in particular they may share it if they please in every bad bargain they make for the public; and the worse their bargain, the better their share will be.

15.
His alarm-
ing picture
of its effect
on public
morals.

“Then an immense subsidy given to some little prince who deals in soldiers, or an immense arrear stated *in favour of these little merchants of human flesh*, may be so ordered as to steal enough from the public to replenish the royal coffers, glut the Ministers, feed some of their hungry creatures, and bribe a Parliament besides. The establishment of public funds on the credit of these taxes hath been productive of far greater mischiefs than the taxes themselves, not only by increasing the means of corruption and the power of corruption, but the effect it hath had on the spirit of the nation, its manners and morals. Britain will soon be in the state described by Philip II. of his own court:—‘They all take money, except myself and Sapona.’ Britain may ere long be in that very condition in which, and in which alone, her constitution and her liberty, in consequence, may be destroyed, because the people may, in a state of universal corruption, and will in no other, either suffer others to betray them, or betray themselves. How near a progress we had made to this, I determine not. This

I say, that it is time for every man who is desirous to preserve the British constitution, to contribute all he can to prevent the ill effects of that new influence and power which has gained strength in every reign since the Revolution ; of those means of corruption that may be employed one time or other on the part of the Crown ; and of that proneness to corruption on the part of the people that hath been long growing, and still grows.”¹

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1714.

¹ Boling-
broke's
Works,
iii. 302.

Independent of these considerations, which were so obvious that they forced themselves on the consideration of every thinking person in the country, there was a powerful set of feelings, which ere long began to impel the public mind in the same direction. Notwithstanding the strong love of freedom which has in every age characterised the English people, and which has been evinced for nearly a thousand years by the constant struggles they have made to maintain and extend their liberties, there is no nation in whom the principle of loyalty has taken a stronger root, or in which the precept to “fear God and honour the King” is more thoroughly interwoven with their domestic affections. It is the contest of these opposite principles which has produced such constant struggles in every period of English history ; for not only has the strife repeatedly been fierce between them while it lasted, but the temporary triumph of the one has invariably and speedily been followed by a decided reaction in favour of the other. Vehement and energetic in whatever it undertakes, a large part of the Anglo-Saxon race rush alternately into the extreme of republican licentiousness and the enthusiasm of chivalrous loyalty. It was thus that the general and unaccountable submission to their Norman rulers was succeeded by the rebellion of Jack Cade ;

16.
Strong prin-
ciples of
freedom and
loyalty in
the English
character.

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the fervour of the Reformation by the slavish crouching to Henry VIII., and devoted loyalty to Elizabeth ; the bloodshed of the Great Rebellion by the transports of the Restoration ; and that, after running wellnigh mad on occasion of the Popish plot in the reign of Charles II., the people flew into excesses as great against the other party on occasion of the Ryehouse conspiracy.

17.
Reaction of
generous
feelings in
favour of
the Tories
in the ad-
vanced
period of
the war.

A similar reaction took place after James II. was expelled and William III. seated on the throne. The imminent danger which the civil and religious liberties of the country had run, of being subverted by the arbitrary measures of that sincere and conscientious but headstrong and senseless prince, had produced a general combination of parties, which rendered the monarch powerless, and occasioned his bloodless fall from the throne. But after the deed was accomplished, and the king expelled, the nation began to reflect on what it had done. Divisions, as usual, were consequent on success. A reaction, similar in kind, though inferior in degree, to what took place when the head of Charles I. fell on the scaffold, took place over the whole country. Surrounded by his guards, directed by his priests, preceded by his lawyers, aided by Jefferies, James had been regarded with deserved hatred and dread. Exiled from his country, cast down from his throne, eating the bread of the stranger, he became the object of pity. The loyal and generous feelings revived with additional force on the cessation of the dangers which had for a time restrained their manifestation. These feelings became peculiarly strong in the rural or country party, which beheld with undisguised indignation their fortunes eclipsed and their influence destroyed by the sycophants

and capitalists who crowded the royal antechamber, and participated in the gains of the Treasury. It was soon found that the Revolution had removed one set of dangers only to introduce another. Protestantism was secure, but public morality was sinking; the Star Chamber was no longer to be feared, but corruption had become general; nothing was heard of the prerogative, but Parliament had become so obsequious that its submission seemed almost a matter of course, even to a despotic prince. When to this natural reaction against a great and violent change in the government was added the spontaneous return of a loyal people to that attachment to their sovereign from which they could not be long estranged, and the enormous and seemingly interminable expenses of a protracted and burdensome contest, it is not surprising that the war became daily more unpopular, and Marlborough, who was with justice regarded as its head, the object of general obloquy.

Voltaire, who never lost an opportunity of representing human affairs as governed entirely by caprice or accident, would make his readers believe that the whole change was the result of a bedchamber intrigue at the court of Queen Anne, and that a fit of passion in Mrs Masham arrested the course of Marlborough's victories, and preserved the tottering throne of Louis XIV. But the considerations which have now been stated, demonstrate that this was very far from being the case; that general causes co-operated with special ones in producing the grand result; and that the palace intrigue was not so much the cause as the effect of that general change in the public mind, which had come over the nation in the later years of the war, and which all the lustre of Marlborough's victories had not been able to arrest. And

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1714.

18.
Which distinctly appears in the votes and composition of the House of Commons.

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this appeared in the most decisive manner in the votes of the House during the progress of the contest. When the war began, it was supported by a large majority in both Houses; but as the contest rolled on, and its expenses increased, the majority in the lower House gradually dropped off: when Harley and St John were introduced into the ministry, it assumed that transition character which is seldom of long duration, but which always accompanies a coalition; and when at length the Whigs, with the exception of Marlborough, were entirely turned out, and he was left alone to conduct the war, amidst his political enemies, the Government was supported by a large majority in the House of Commons. All the violent and ungenerous proceedings against that great general, his dismissal from office, the innumerable vexations to which he was exposed, and the accusations of peculation which were brought against him, were carried by large majorities in the House of Commons: the House of Peers, after it had been swamped by the creation of twelve new members, ceased to struggle any longer with the declared voice of the public; and whatever posterity may have thought of it, nothing is more certain than that the peace of Utrecht itself was, despite the cutting strictures of a few indignant patriots, cordially approved of at the time by a great majority in the nation.

19.
Character
of Boling-
broke.

Bolingbroke, whose great abilities, both as a statesman, an orator, and a writer, rendered him the real head of the party in England that ultimately effected the great change in its foreign policy which altered the whole face of Europe, was one of the most remarkable men even among the brilliant wits of Queen Anne's reign. It could not be said of him, as he said of Marlborough, that he was the perfection of genius aided only

by experience. On the contrary, he shared largely in the advantages of a refined education, and his native abilities acquired additional lustre from the brilliant foreign setting in which they never failed to appear. An accomplished classical scholar, profoundly versed in the philosophy, history, and poetry of Greece and Rome, he not only made use of the treasures of ancient genius to enrich his thoughts, but brought forward their expressions with the happiest effect, to aid and adorn his eloquence. Nature had been prodigal to him of those gifts, without which the most brilliant genius can seldom produce any lasting effect on popular assemblies. His countenance was in the highest degree expressive, his elocution rapid and easy, his memory ready and tenacious, his imagination vivid and impassioned. Such was the power of extempore composition which he possessed, that, on the testimony even of the most inveterate of his political opponents, you might have printed what fell from him during the warmth of convivial conversation, without any inelegance or inaccuracy being perceptible. These brilliant qualities shone forth with peculiar lustre in the ease and *abandon* of social intercourse with the illustrious literary men who adorned the reign of Queen Anne, and the early part of that of George I. Pope, it is well known, almost idolised him ; and the thoughts in the *Essay on Man* are said to have been in great part suggested by his conversation.

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1714.

“ Awake, my St John, leave all meaner things
 To low ambition and the pride of kings ;
 Let us, since life can little more supply,
 Than just to look about us and to die,
 Expatiate free o’er all this scene of man,
 A mighty maze ! but not without a plan ;
 Laugh where we must, be candid where we can,
 But vindicate the ways of God to man.”

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1714.

20.

His incon-
sistencies
and faults.

Had Bolingbroke's steadiness of principle and consistency of conduct been equal to these shining abilities, he would have been one of the most eminent men that England ever produced. But this, unfortunately, was very far from being the case. In him, more truly than any other man, might be seen the truth of the words of Scripture, "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Inconsistency and want of rectitude were the bane at once of his political conduct and his literary compositions. He was so changeable in his partialities, so variable in his declamations, that there is hardly an eminent man, and certainly not a political party of his time, that he has not alternately praised to the skies and loaded with vituperation. It is scarcely possible to say what his principles were, for at different periods of his life he espoused those of all men. His only steady aversion seemed to have been to Christianity; and Voltaire acquired almost all the arguments which he afterwards wielded with so much effect against religion from his conversation and knowledge. Yet he was not an atheist. Pope's *Essay on Man*, and many other passages in his own writings, demonstrate that he had exalted but vague and dreamy ideas of natural religion. Horace Walpole said of him—"With the most agreeable talents in the world, and with great parts, he was neither happy nor successful. He wrote against the King, who had forgiven him; against Sir Robert Walpole, who did forgive him; against the Pretender and the clergy, who never will forgive him. He is one of our best writers, though his attacks on all governments and all religions (neither of which views he cared directly to own) have necessarily involved his style in a want of perspicuity. One must know the man before we can often guess his

meaning.”* This inconsistency tainted his private and moral, as well as public and political character. He was ambitious, and unscrupulous as to the means of elevation; vehement in hatred; variable in principle. Capable of profound dissimulation, he occasionally exercised it, and effectually deceived the most penetrating of his opponents. But, in general, the liveliness of his imagination, and quickness of his temper, caused him to give vent to the desire or feeling of the moment with an ardour which admitted neither of concealment nor moderation. And hence the otherwise inexplicable inconsistencies and contradictions both of his public life and his private thoughts.

Harley, afterwards created Earl of Oxford, brought to the support of the same party talents of a much inferior but still very serviceable kind. He had not the brilliancy of St John's imagination, his vast stores of erudition, or his power of ready and extempore eloquence. But he was more prudent and sagacious, had more worldly wisdom, and incomparably more of a statesman's tact than his brilliant coadjutor. He was astute, able, and ambitious. Neither the field nor the senate were the fit theatre of his activity; the purlieus of a court, the antechambers of a queen, were the real scene of his greatness. *There* he was most formidable,—for he was alike able and unscrupulous, intriguing and agreeable. He had great powers for wielding and augmenting a parliamentary party. His wisdom and discretion—like those of Sir Robert Peel in the reconstruction of the same party after its discomfiture by the Revolution of 1832—brought the Tories up from a small minority in the commencement of the War of the Succession, to a

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21.

Character
of Harley,
Earl of Ox-
ford.

* *Royal and Noble Authors*, p. 74.

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22.
Swift and
the Tory
writers in
the press.

decided majority before its close, in the Commons, Lords, and Queen's Council. He was no common man who, in the face of a large Whig majority at the commencement of the struggle, and despite the lustre of Marlborough's victories, could so take advantage of the mutations of fortune, the changes of public opinion, and the still more variable gales of court favour, as under such circumstances to accomplish such a success.

It was not, however, either in Parliament or the Cabinet that the main strength of the party which overthrew Marlborough, and brought about the peace of Utrecht, was founded. It was the vast ability and sarcastic powers of their allies in the press which chiefly produced the result. The Tories were supported by a band of writers who, in the war of pamphlets, by which the contests of parties out of Parliament at that period were carried on, never have been exceeded as regards the versatility of their powers, and the thorough knowledge they possessed of the means of rousing and inflaming the general mind. SWIFT was the most powerful of that determined band; and never did intellectual gladiator bring to the deadly strife of envenomed rapiers, qualities more admirably adapted for success. Able, penetrating, and sagacious, possessed of great powers of argument—greater still of sarcasm—thoroughly acquainted with human nature, and unfettered by any of the delicacies which in men of more refined character often prevent the stirring of its passions,—he knew how to excite the public mind by awakening their jealousy in regard to matters which came home to every understanding. Disregarding all remote considerations adapted only for the thoughtful, drawn from the balance of power, matters of foreign policy, or the ultimate danger of England, he

at once fastened on Marlborough the damning charge of pecuniary cupidity ; held forth the continuance of the war as entirely owing to his sordid thirst of gain, and all the wealth which flowed into the coffers of the great commander as wrung from the labours of hard-wrought Englishmen. Concealing and perverting what he knew was the truth of ancient history, he represented the Roman consul as rewarded for his victories by a triumph which cost less than £1000, and Marlborough enjoying £500,000 as the fruit of his laurels. He forgot to add, that such were the means of amassing a fortune which victory gave to the Roman proconsuls, that Cæsar, before obtaining the province of Gaul, was enabled on its prospect to contract £750,000 of debt. It may be conceived what effect such misrepresentations had upon a people already groaning under new taxes, terrified at the growth of the national debt, and inflamed with that envy which the rapid rise even of the most exalted merit scarce ever fails to produce in the great majority of men. The Whigs had able writers, too, on their side ; but they were no match for their adversaries in the power of producing a present effect on the multitude, whatever they might be on the cultivated in future ages ; and the elegant papers of Addison and Steele, in the *Spectator* and *Freeholder*, were but a poor set-off to the coarse invectives and withering sarcasms of Swift.

Bolingbroke and Harley were Tory and monarchical in their ideas : they belonged to the High Church party in religion, and in secret they dreamt of the restoration of the exiled dynasty. Being actuated by such principles, it is not surprising that they viewed with jealousy, and at last with open and undisguised aversion, the course of Marlborough's victories, and lent all the weight

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23.

Feelings
and principles
of the
High Tories
in regard to
the war.

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of their talents and influence to aid in the propagation of the libels calculated to destroy him. Those triumphs, however glorious to England, however vital to its existence as an independent state, were all adverse to their political principles. They threatened to extinguish the monarchical and Roman Catholic principles in the person of Louis XIV., and raise to supremacy, in their stead, the morose doctrines of the Covenanters, the Solemn League and Covenant, the principles of the Dutch republicans. Queen Anne, with the usual instinct of crowned heads, when in secure possession of power, inclined to the same opinions. She felt the same repugnance to the Whigs, who had placed her after William on the throne, that Louis Philippe, in after times, did to Lafayette and the patriots of 1830, who had erected the throne of the Barricades. These principles and feelings were not confined to the leaders of the party and the sovereign on the throne : they pervaded the whole body of their followers, and took deep root in the noblest and most generous affections of the human heart.

* 24.
It was these
causes
which over-
turned
Marlbo-
rough.

The warmest partisans of royalty in Great Britain and Ireland were to be found in the French ranks : they embraced many of the most generous and exalted, because disinterested, persons in the British dominions. Their appearance excited profound sympathy and admiration wherever they appeared on the Continent.*

* " Leurs aventures furent dignes des beaux jours de Sparte et d'Athènes. Ils étaient tous d'une naissance honorable ; attachés à leurs chefs, et affectionnés les uns aux autres ; irréprochables en tout. Ils se formaient en une compagnie de soldats au service de France. Ils furent passés en revue par le Roi à St Germain en Laye : le Roi salua les troupes par une inclination de la tête et le chapeau bas. Il revint, salua de nouveau, et fondit en larmes. Ils se mirent à genoux, baissant la tête contre la terre, puis se relevant tout à la fois, ils lui firent le salut militaire. Ils furent envoyés delà à les frontières

The Pretender himself combated at Malplaquet against Marlborough in the midst of the chivalry of France. It would be erroneous, therefore, to consider the intrigues and animosity which at length effected the downfall of Marlborough, and brought about the peace of Utrecht, as entirely the result of a revolution *du Palais*,—a bedchamber affair, in which the interests and glory of nations were sacrificed to the spite or the jealousies of women ; and still more unjust would it be to stigmatise Bolingbroke and Harley as worthless adventurers, who were actuated in their opposition to the great hero of the age by mere personal envy or political hostility. Mrs Masham's bedchamber intrigue, and Bolingbroke's cabinet measures, were merely the form which a great principle, at all times strong in English society, and then peculiarly active, took in order to avert a danger with which, in their estimation, English institutions were threatened. And that principle is expressed in the words, "Fear God and honour the King."

It is evident, from what has been said, that the Tory party had much argument on their side in this great controversy ; and that though we, instructed by the event, may now see very clearly that they erred on the occasion, yet there is much to be said on their behalf ; and the strongest judgment, as well as the purest patriotism, might at the time have found it difficult to

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d'Espagne, ce que formait un marche de 900 milles. Partout où ils passaient ils tiraient des larmes des yeux des femmes, obtenaient le respect de quelques hommes, et en faisant rire d'autres par la moquerie qui s'attache au malheur. Ils étaient toujours les premiers dans une bataille, et les derniers dans une retraite. Ils manquèrent souvent des choses les plus nécessaires à la vie, cependant on ne les entendit jamais se plaindre, excepté des souffrances de celui qu'ils regardaient comme leur souverain."—CHATEAUBRIAND, *Mémoires sur le Duc de Berry*, Œuvres, ii. 68.

25.
Great violations of moral rectitude in the mode of their attack on Marlborough.

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say on which side the scales of reason preponderated. But there is one point for which no apology can be made, and for which all the heat of party and all the reality of impending danger can afford no excuse. This was the *manner* in which they prosecuted their hostility against Marlborough and the war. They did not dispossess the one, and terminate the other, as they might have done, by a simple vote of the House of Commons. They did not venture for long on any open attack on either. They were afraid to measure their strength in open combat with the conqueror of Blenheim. They preferred the covert attacks of envy, malice, and uncharitableness. Their weapons, with the people, were malignant libels ; at court, underhand bedchamber intrigues. They did not deprive the hero of his command, but they strove to thwart his measures so that they might prove unsuccessful. Openly they declared that any minister deserved to lose his head who should propose to abandon Spain and the Indies to a Bourbon prince : in secret they were negotiating with Louis at that very moment a treaty of peace, the basis of which was that very relinquishment. Ostensibly they still paid to Marlborough the external marks of respect, but they ceased to admit him to their confidential counsels ; they denied him the thanks of Parliament for his services ; they encouraged the circulation of the most malignant falsehoods regarding his character ; they did their utmost to load him with indignities and mortifications at Court. Their object seems to have been to induce him, through disgust at their ingratitude, to resign ; and thus to have spared them the discredit of removing the greatest general of England from a command which he had held with so much glory. And

when the temper or patriotism of Marlborough was proof against their attack, they descended to the infamy of charging him with peculation, on grounds so false that they did not venture to bring them to judicial investigation, even in the House of Peers, which they had swamped for his overthrow. At last they drove the greatest general of England, and the most signal benefactor that ever had arisen to his country, into disgrace, in order to bring about a discreditable peace, which deprived the nation of the chief fruit of his victories.

And the result has now decisively proved that Bolingbroke and the Tories were as wrong on this occasion in their general policy as in the means for its accomplishment; and that the course which Godolphin and Marlborough contended for, and, but for the change of ministry, undoubtedly would have carried into effect, was the one imperatively required by the honour and interests of England. Spain and France were the two powers by whom the independence of this country had been separately threatened for two centuries. The narrow escape made from invasion, and possibly dismemberment, on occasion of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and the battle of La Hogue in 1692, sufficiently demonstrate this. The union of *the two* under one head, therefore, could not but prove in the highest degree perilous to the independence of England. Both parties seemed to admit this; but they proposed different means to avert the danger. Marlborough and the Whigs maintained that it could be effectually done only by separating, in a permanent manner, the *reigning families* in France and Spain—and to effect this, they proposed to settle the crown of Spain on Charles VI., Archduke of Austria. Provided this was done, they

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26.

What was
the danger
to be guard-
ed against in
the Peace.

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had no objections that an appanage for the Duke of Anjou, the other competitor for the throne, should be carved out of the other possessions of the Spanish crown in Italy and Sicily. This was substantially the basis they assumed in the conferences of Gertruydenberg in 1709. Bolingbroke and the Tories, again, contended that it was unnecessary to separate the reigning families, provided only that the *two crowns* were prevented from uniting on one head; and to prevent this they introduced the stringent clauses into the treaty of Utrecht, already mentioned, providing that the Salic law, which *excludes females from the succession*, should be the law of the Spanish throne, and that in no event, and under no circumstances, should the crowns of Spain and France be united on the same head.

27.
The result
has proved
the Tories
were wrong
in their po-
lity regard-
ing it.

These provisions appeared, at first sight, to guard, in part at least, against the danger which threatened; and this circumstance, coupled with the natural desire of men to terminate a long and burdensome war, rendered the peace of Utrecht generally acceptable to the nation. It was foreseen, however, at the time, and loudly declared by the Whigs, both in Parliament and the country, that this security was seeming only, and that leaving a grandson of Louis XIV. on the throne of Spain, with the name of an independent kingdom, was in reality more dangerous to the security of England than the junction of the two crowns on the same head would have been. The event has now decisively proved the justice of this view. Had the crown of Spain been openly placed on the same head as that of France, the alliance of the two powers could not have been of long continuance. Castilian pride would have revolted at the idea of being subjected to the government of Paris:

the war of independence in 1808 has shown what results follow the open assertion over the Peninsula of French domination. But by leaving Spain a crown nominally independent, but closely united by blood and interest with the French monarchy, the object of Louis XIV. was gained, and in a way more safe and certain than even the union of the crowns could have afforded. The *family compact* succeeded. A close and indissoluble alliance between France and Spain, which subsisted unbroken for above a century, was the result. Spanish pride was soothed by the appearance of an independent government at Madrid : French ambition was gratified by the substantial devotion of the whole resources of Spain to the purposes of France.

The effects were soon apparent. In every war which ensued between France and England for the next century,—that of 1739, that of 1756, the American War, that of 1793,—Spain and France ere long united in hostilities against this country. Astonishing exertions of vigour and bravery on the part of our countrymen alone prevented the alliance proving fatal to the independence of England. We were worsted by them in the very next contest which followed the treaty of Utrecht, that which was terminated by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The extraordinary genius of Frederick of Prussia and of Lord Chatham, joined to corresponding incapacity in the government of Louis XV., gave us, indeed, a glorious career of triumphs during the Seven Years' War. But when another power was added to their league, it became evident that England was overmatched by France and Spain. England was brought by the forces of France, Spain, and America, to the brink of ruin in the American War. The want of any popular histo-

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28.

Disastrous effects and serious dangers to England which followed the leaving a Bourbon on the Spanish throne.

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torian to recount the events of that calamitous period has rendered the nation insensible to the dangers it then ran; when the American colonies were in open and fierce revolt; when Hyder Ali had driven the English into Madras, and preparations were making for crossing the surf and abandoning India for ever; and when our colonial empire in the East was saved solely by the firmness of one man, whom England rewarded for his conduct by an impeachment! At that dreadful moment the French and Spanish armies and fleets besieged Gibraltar, which was saved only by an extraordinary effort of skill on the part of Lord Howe, and soon after the combined fleets rode triumphant in the Channel, and blockaded Plymouth with forty-seven sail of the line, where the English fleet had sought refuge with twenty-one sail only.

29.
 Examples
 of this in
 later times.

At the commencement of the Revolutionary War, the French and Spanish navies greatly outnumbered those of this country,* and in every one of the actions which followed from that of St Vincent, where the English fleet was fifteen sail to twenty-seven, to that of Trafalgar, where it was twenty-seven to thirty-three, the combined fleets were superior in numerical amount to our own. It is not generally known, but it is historically certain, that England was brought nearer to destruc-

* Viz:—

	Line fit for Service.	Frigates.
French,	82	79
Spanish,	76	68
	—	—
	158	147
English,	115	85
	—	—
Excess of French and Spanish,	43	62

—JAMES'S *Naval History*, i. 49-51-53. Appendix 11, 6 and 7.

tion by the alliance of Louis XVI. and the Spanish monarchy, in 1782, than she afterwards was by the arms and power of Napoleon. And whoever contemplates these events with calmness and impartiality, will have little difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that, had not the naval resources of France been destroyed by the confiscations and disasters of the Revolution, and the strength of the Peninsula been bound to our side by the unprovoked attack of Napoleon on Spanish independence in 1808, it is more than doubtful whether, ere this, the maritime superiority and colonial empire of England would not have been destroyed, and with them our national independence for ever lost. Such and so real were the dangers which Marlborough strove to avert; such and so great the perils brought upon the state by the Tories in 1712, from suffering political passions and private interests to render them insensible to the calls of public duty.

And it is worthy of especial observation, that this danger, from the close alliance of France and Spain, was *entirely owing* to the family compact arising from the Bourbons having been permitted by the treaty of Utrecht to remain on the throne of Spain. Prior to that succession, France and Spain were not only never in alliance, but always on terms of the most *bitter and rancorous hostility*. "My father's bones would rise from their grave," was a common saying in Castile, "if he could foresee a war with France." All the greatest wars in which France, prior to the succession of 1703, had engaged with Continental powers, had been with Spain. A French monarch had been made prisoner at Pavia, and conducted to Madrid: French chivalry avenged the insult at Rocroy and Lens; Henry IV. and the Prince

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30.
These dangers have arisen solely from the Spanish alliance.

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of Parma had exerted their rival talents against each other ; and even in the early part of the reign of Louis XIV. the Spaniards were the most formidable enemies with which that monarch had to contend on the Continent. So late as 1688 the same disposition of the cabinets of Madrid and Paris continued ; and it was the knowledge that Spain had in secret joined the league of Augsburg in that year, against him, which determined Louis XIV. to exert all his influence to obtain the Spanish succession for his grandson. With an *Austrian* prince seated on the throne at Madrid, this alliance of France and Spain was not only impossible, but it was certain that the resources of the Peninsula would be mainly directed in hostility to French interests. Mutual necessity, and jealousy of their formidable common enemy, would have made Spain and England as cordial allies, during the whole of the eighteenth century, as Scotland and France were in the days of Scottish independence ; as Turkey and France were during the long wars of the latter power with the Imperialists in Germany ; or as Spain and England became on the occasion of the invasion of the Peninsula by Napoleon in 1808. It was *this* great benefit which Marlborough's victories had secured for his country ; it is this alliance which his diplomacy, had it been unopposed at home, would have secured, instead of the subservient government which, for a whole century after, placed its fleets and armies at the disposal of the French government, and brought this country to the verge of perdition in consequence.¹

¹ Capefigue,
Hist. de
Louis XIV.
iii. 296.

If any doubt could exist on this subject, and with regard to the imminent danger of a family alliance between France and Spain to this country, it would be removed by the following consideration. Though Spain

in the first instance joined the coalition against the French republic, she soon fell off from it; and the treaty between the two countries in 1795 was immediately followed by the accession of the court of Madrid to the league of our enemies. With Spain by his side, Napoleon was constantly victorious; but from the moment that, through his perfidious aggression, he converted the Peninsular powers into enemies, his fortunes declined, until, from the effects of the double strain on his resources, he was involved in ruin. Taught by this great example, we shall no longer wonder that Louis XIV. made it the chief boast of his reign—"Enfin il n'y a plus de Pyrenees," and braved the hostility of combined Europe, and risked destruction from Marlborough's victories, in order to secure the succession for his grandson. It will no longer appear surprising that Napoleon hazarded all upon preserving his hold of the Peninsula, and incurred destruction rather than abandon its strongholds when he set out on his Russian expedition. It will cease to be a matter of wonder that Parisian diplomacy has been so incessantly directed since 1830 to secure this benefit for the King of the French, and that Louis Philippe, during the whole remainder of his reign, regarded the Montpensier alliance as the brightest event of it. United by family compact to Spain, France has been proved by experience to be so strong as to become formidable to the liberties of all Europe. Severed from Spain, she is deprived of her chief means of aggrandisement, and in an especial manner ceases to be dangerous to the independence of Great Britain.

The circumstance which in every age, and in the opinion of the most penetrating statesmen of Europe, has rendered the Spanish alliance of such vital impor-

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31.

It was a sense of this advantage which made Napoleon engage in the Peninsular war.

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32.

Causes
which ren-
der the alli-
ance of
Spain of
such vital
importance
to France.

tance to the French monarchy, is not merely the accession of power which it brings, considerable though that has often proved, to the court of the Tuileries. It is the securing it *in rear* which is the great advantage. In alliance with Spain, France can send her whole military force to the Rhine ; the weight of thirty-four millions of men is at once felt by Germany. In hostility to Spain, half the force of France must be reserved at home, or placed in observation on the Pyrenees, to secure the southern provinces of the monarchy from insult. The doubtful chance of the War of the Succession, the disastrous termination of the Peninsular contest, has shown France but too clearly what a dangerous battle-field for foreign hostility the mountains of Spain and Portugal afford. If we would duly estimate the addition the Spanish alliance makes, even without any actual increase of soldiers or sailors, to the power of France, we have only to reflect on the vast increase which the strength of England received without any great force being added to its material resources, from the mere union with Scotland, and consequent termination of those mischievous intrigues which, before that auspicious event, constantly, on the breaking out of hostilities with France, occasioned a distracting warfare on the banks of the Tweed. Or perhaps a still apter illustration may be found in the present state of Great Britain and Ireland. Certainly no minister ever could add so much to the power of Great Britain as that one who, without drawing any supplies from the Emerald Isle, should merely prevent the constant *distraction* of the resources of the empire from the alternately turbulent and miserable state of its inhabitants ; and whatever cause the people of Great Britain might have to

applaud, most certainly its enemies would have little reason to thank the statesman who kindly provided a princess, the marriage of whom with an English prince might render real an alliance which all the efforts of six centuries had been unable to consummate.

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1714.

If any surprise should exist as to the blindness of Bolingbroke and the Tories, when they arrested the course of Marlborough's victories and secured the Spanish alliance to the French monarchy, or any doubt as to political passion being the real cause which induced this insensibility to national interests, it would be removed by what has occurred in our own time. The heroic and persevering efforts of the nation during the Revolutionary war, the victories of Nelson and Wellington, had again reduced France to its original limits; and though the Bourbon dynasty was still on the throne of Madrid, yet the exasperation and exhaustion of the Peninsula, consequent on the dreadful war it had sustained with France, had rendered it no longer formidable, at least for the present, as an ally of that power. But political passions in 1830, as in 1712, got possession of England, and with an infatuation which would be incredible, if the blindness ever produced by those passions was not considered, we surrendered the whole objects for which we had so long been contending, and which had, in part at least, been secured by the triumphs of Marlborough and Wellington. With one hand we favoured the partition of the kingdom of the Netherlands, which we ourselves had created to be a check on France, and had guaranteed by the treaty of Vienna in 1815 as a *united* power; aided with our fleets the army of Louis Philippe in restoring Antwerp, the great outwork of Napoleon against this country, to the sway of the tricolor flag, and

33.

Instance of
the same
political in-
fatuation in
our times.

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converted the Flemish fortresses, the outwork of Europe against France, into the outwork of France against Europe. With the other we crushed the efforts of the Spanish people to place a king of their choice on the throne ; kept alive for years a frightful and desolating civil war in the Basque provinces ; concluded the Quadruple Alliance, in order to change the Salic law, which we ourselves had stipulated for Spain, and solemnly guaranteed by the treaty of Utrecht ; and violated our pledged national faith, in order to place a succession of revolutionary queens on the throne of the Peninsula.

34.
Results
which have
followed
from it in
the last in-
stance.

We have got our reward. The result has followed which the few thoughtful persons, whom the prevailing mania of the day had not carried away, clearly anticipated at the very first, from our revolutionary propagandism. Our whole policy, for the ten years during which it was dictated by political passions—not regulated by regard to national interests—has turned to the advantage of our enemies. Louis Philippe profited, as well he might, by the temporary eclipse of our reason. He secured the Netherlands for France, with its magnificent fortresses, and noble harbour of Antwerp, by the marriage of a daughter ; and to all appearance gained Spain, with its vast sea-coast and boundless capabilities, by the marriage of a son. He united these powers to France by a more enduring bond than even family alliance—the lasting tie of common interest arising from a common origin. Through all the changes of fortune, revolutionary powers will hold by each other, because they feel that mutual support is essential to their defence against legitimate monarchies. He condescended to accept the princess, whom our strange and perfidious policy had rendered the heiress-presumptive

of the throne of Madrid, for a son of France. The dream of Louis XIV. is realised—there are no longer any Pyrenees. By erecting the revolutionary throne of Belgium, and dispossessing the male line in Spain, we have at one blow abandoned the whole security gained by the victories of Marlborough and Wellington. We have done that for France which neither the ambition of Louis XIV. nor the arms of Napoleon could effect. We have abandoned even the slight security against the union of the French and Spanish powers, which Bolingbroke stipulated by the treaty of Utrecht. There is no longer any real impediment to the union of the French and Spanish crowns. Backed by the Belgian and Spanish alliances, the French Government, Royal or Republican, may deride our impotent protests. And when next we go to war with France, we shall have to confront a power stretching from the Scheldt to Gibraltar; and to combat fleets which, in 1782, blockaded Plymouth with forty-seven sail of the line, and in 1793 outnumbered the English navy by forty-three line-of-battle ships!

It is stated by Capecigue, in his admirable history of Louis XIV.,* that we should err much if we imagined that the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was regarded in the same light by its contemporaries with which it is viewed by ourselves. Notwithstanding its frightful cruelty, it was universally considered by the dominant Catholic majority over all Europe as a masterpiece of political wisdom; a measure alike called for by its evident justice and its palpable expedience. Even the Massacre of St Bartholomew is never mentioned by the contemporary Catholic historians save with exultation;

35.
Strange insensibility to national sins which often prevails.

* By far the best history of that eventful reign which has yet appeared in Europe.

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and Charles IX., who perpetrated it, is the object of universal eulogium. It was the same in 1793. The expatriation of a hundred thousand emigrants, the confiscation of their estates, the murder of a tithe of their number on the scaffold, the destruction of a million of lives during the Revolution, excited neither indignation nor commiseration in the Jacobin majority in France. It was universally regarded by them as a measure equally expedient, justifiable, and necessary. The entire abandonment at once of our public faith and national policy, in like manner, during the fervour of political passions in this country, some years ago, in relation both to Spain and the Netherlands ; the nourishing a frightful civil war for years together on the banks of the Ebro ; the dispossessing a sovereign we were pledged as a nation to maintain on the throne of Spain, excited no general feeling, either of pity or indignation, in this country. It was thought to be quite natural and proper that we should supplant legitimate kings by revolutionary queens in every country around us. We sent thousands of gallant desperadoes to "call a new world into existence," by revolutionising the colonies of Spain in South America, with which state we were then at peace, and the piratical act was generally applauded in the country : the same act, when perpetrated by the Americans in Texas, and attempted in Cuba, excited universal reprobation. Examples of this sort are fitted to awaken at once feelings of charity and distrust in our breasts—

charity to others, distrust of ourselves. They may teach us to view with a lenient if not a forgiving eye the aberrations of those nations which have yielded to the force of those passions under which, with so many more means of resistance,¹ our own understandings have so

¹ Capefigue, *Hist. de Louis XIV.* iii. 172.
Hist. de la Réform. iii. 239, 240.

violently reeled ; and to examine anxiously whether many of the public measures which at the time are the subject of the most general approbation in this country, are not in reality as unjust, and will not be condemned by posterity as unanimously, as the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, or any other of the most atrocious acts by which the pages of history are stained.

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The remarkable analogy must strike even the most superficial observer, between the position of the Tories and the policy which they adopted during the contest of the Succession, and that which the Whigs occupied, and their conduct during the war of the Revolution. On both occasions the Opposition was resolutely set against a war which a ministry in power was carrying on with vigour and success against a preponderating power in France, that threatened, and had wellnigh overturned, the independence of all the adjoining states in Europe. In both, the contest was one of life or death for the liberties, and even the existence, of England ; and yet the Opposition in both exerted their whole influence and abilities to mar its progress and impede its success. In both, a great and victorious English general headed the forces of the alliance ; and in both, for a series of years, his successes were underrated, his achievements vilified, his efforts thwarted, by the Opposition, in the very country whose glory he was daily augmenting, and securely establishing on a more durable foundation. In both, Great Britain was combating a power which had proved itself to be the deadliest enemy to real freedom, for it is hard to say whether Louis XIV.'s persecution of the Protestants, or the atrocities of the Convention at Paris a century after, inflicted the cruellest wounds on the cause of liberty. In both, the league of the

36.
Analogy between the situation of the Tories in the War of the Succession, and the Whigs in that of the Revolution.

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Allies, though originally springing out of this unbearable oppression, had come to hinge mainly on the necessity of preventing the political power of France being extended over Spain. In both, the chief seats of war for the English and French armies were Spain and the Low Countries ; and in both, the decisive blows were at length struck on the Flemish plains.

37.
Extraordi-
nary coinci-
dence in the
crises of the
two con-
tests.

And the crisis in each brings the parallel still closer, and to a most singular, and some may think almost providential, coincidence. For *in May* 1712, the Tories consummated the war on which they had so long been engaged, by effecting the separation of England from the alliance, when the iron barrier of France was at last effectually broken through, and nothing remained to prevent Marlborough and Eugene from marching in triumph to Paris ; and *in May* 1812, just a hundred years after, the Whigs had the means put into their hands of effecting their long-desired pacification with France, by the Prince Regent sending for their leaders to form a ministry on the expiry of the year of restriction enforced on him by act of Parliament, on his assuming the power of King. If the Whigs had succeeded in forming a government at that period, if the apparently trivial dispute about the household appointments had not restored their opponents to power, there can be no doubt that a peace, similar to that of Utrecht, would have stopped the war for a time, and bequeathed its dangers and its burdens to another, perhaps the present age. And this was on the eve of the Salamanca campaign, and at the opening of the Moscow expedition !*

* "The negotiation between the Prince Regent and the Whigs was broken off on the 6th June, 1812. On the 13th of the same month, Wellington crossed the Portuguese frontier, and commenced the Salamanca campaign ;

It must appear, at first sight, not a little extraordinary that conduct so precisely similar, and in both cases so diametrically at variance with the real interests of the country, should in this manner have been alternately pursued by the two great parties whose contests have for nearly two hundred years so entirely engrossed English domestic history. But the marvel ceases when their internal political situation is considered. In both cases, the Opposition who resisted a war and strove to arrest its progress, which was conducted with glory and success by their opponents, had recently before been dispossessed of power. The Tories, by the Revolution of 1688, had been so completely driven from the helm, that, as the event proved, they did not recover their ground for seventy years, and a change of dynasty at the time could alone secure them in it. The Whigs had, by the ministerial revolution of 1784, been, after the most strenuous efforts on their part, so effectually dispossessed of power, that they had no prospect of recovering it, but by the national calamity of a failure in the war in which their antagonists were engaged. Thus, by a singular combination of circumstances, the two parties, at the interval of a century from each other, stood in precisely the same situation, so far as the depending foreign war and its reaction upon their domestic prospects were concerned. The interests of both were identified with the misfortunes of this country and the triumphs of its enemies. Their wishes, as is generally the case, followed in the same direction. The secret inclinations of the Tories, in the War of the Succession,

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33.

Real causes
of this identity
of conduct of the
opposite
parties on
these occasions.

while on the 23d Napoleon passed the Niemen, and perilled his crown and his life on the precarious issue of a Russian invasion."—ALISON'S *Europe*, chap. lxiv. § 45.

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were with the court of St Germain's, because its restoration to royalty would at once have replaced them at the helm ; the secret wishes of the Whigs, in the war of the Revolution, were with the tricolor flag, because its triumphs would at once have ruined the Tories, and restored them to the much-coveted possession of power. In both cases the selfish prevailed over the generous, the party over the patriotic, feelings of our nature. In both, the party in opposition were false to their country, but true, as they thought, at least to themselves. And both have obtained their just punishment by receiving the merited condemnation of succeeding times.

39.
Excuses
which ex-
isted for the
policy of the
Tories at
the treaty
of Utrecht,
from the
dread of
Spain.

Though the event, however, has decisively proved that Bolingbroke and Oxford judged wrong in detaching England from the Grand Alliance in 1712, and that their measures, by securing to France the family compact with the Spanish Bourbons, brought the country to the brink of ruin in 1782, yet it must be admitted, in their vindication, that plausible arguments were not wanting to justify the unpatriotic course which they adopted. Great as was the power of France in the time of Louis XIV., it was comparatively of recent growth. Serious as had been the perils of the nation from his ambition, it had been placed in yet greater danger by the enterprises of the Spanish monarchy. The terrors of the Armada were yet fresh in the minds of the people ; the monarchy of Charles V. was the nearest approach to universal dominion which had been made since the days of Charlemagne. If the Whigs had succeeded in making Louis XIV. accept the terms offered to him by the Allies at Gertruydenberg in 1709, which they were within a hair's-breadth of doing, the monarchy of Charles V. was reconstructed in favour of the Emperor of Ger-

many, with an apparently considerable accession of power. The whole present dominions of Austria in Germany and Lombardy, Naples and Sicily, Flanders, Spain, and South America, would have constituted the hereditary dominions of a power to which the imperial crown would, as a matter of course, have come to be permanently united.

The Tories, however, in the time of Queen Anne, were too clear-sighted not to see that the danger from the Spanish monarchy, great as it had been a century before, had passed away before their time, and that France was the power by which the independence of England was really threatened. If circumstances had rendered the junction of the Spanish dominions to one or other unavoidable, it was evidently for the interest of Great Britain that it should be united to the distant and inland territories of the house of Austria, destitute of fleets and harbours, and constantly engrossed with wars with the Turks, rather than to the great and flourishing monarchy of France, with an extensive sea-coast, and a navy rivalling our own, in close vicinity, and actuated by a jealousy of England of many centuries' standing. Bolingbroke has shown that he perceived these obvious truths as clearly as any man, and consequently that the terrors expressed by the Tories on occasion of the peace of Utrecht, at the prospect of reconstructing the empire of Charles V., were hypocritical, and had been got up to conceal objects fundamentally different. "Philip II.," says he, "left his successors a ruined monarchy. He left them something worse; he left them his example and his principles of government, founded in ambition, pride, ignorance, bigotry, and all the pedantry of state. The war in the Low Countries cost him, by his now

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40.
Boling-
broke's pic-
ture of the
ruined state
of the Span-
ish monar-
chy at this
period.

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confession, five hundred and sixty-four millions, a prodigious sum, in whatever specie he reckoned. At home there was much form, but no good order, no economy or wisdom of policy in the state. The Church continued to devour its resources; and that monster, the Inquisition, to dispeople the country even more than perpetual war, and all the numerous colonies that Spain had sent out to the West Indies; for Philip III. drove more than nine hundred thousand Moriscoes out of his dominions by one edict, with such circumstances of inhumanity as the Spaniards alone could exercise, and that tribunal, which had provoked that unhappy race to revolt, could alone approve. Abroad, the conduct of that prince was directed by the same wild spirit of ambition. Rash in undertaking, though slow to execute, obstinate in pursuing, though unable to succeed, they opened a new sluice to let out the little life and vigour that remained in the monarchy. What completed their ruin was this—they knew not how to lose, nor when to yield. They acknowledged the independence of the Dutch commonwealth, and became the allies of their ancient subjects by the treaty of Munster; but they would not forego their usurped claims on Portugal, and they persisted in carrying on singly the war against France. *Thus they were reduced to such a lowness of power as can scarcely be paralleled in any other kingdom.* As to France, this era of the *entire fall of the Spanish power* is likewise that from which we may reckon *that France grew as formidable as we have seen her to her neighbours in power and pretensions.*¹

¹ Bolingbroke on the Study of History, Let. vi.—Works, iii. 464, 465.

Notwithstanding all this, which subsequent events have proved to be entirely well-founded, it is not surprising that the Tories, in the days of Queen Anne,

paused before contributing to such a result, as the consequence of the national efforts during ten campaigns for the preservation of the balance of power in Europe. There were difficulties, and those too of a very serious nature, on all sides. They were right in their dread of reconstructing the monarchy of Charles V.; their great error consisted in the way they set about preventing it. They did this by giving Spain and the Indies to a Bourbon prince, which at once closely united two great *maritime* powers, far more formidable to Britain than the union of one of these with the *inland* and far-severed monarchy of Charles V. ever could have been. What they should have done, was to have given the crown of Spain and the Indies to the Austrian Archduke, but to have stipulated that it should never be placed on the same head as the Imperial crown, or on that which wore the diadem of the Hereditary Dominions in Germany. But though this would have preserved the balance of power, it would not have answered their secret views for rescuing Louis XIV. from his difficulties, in order to prop the exiled throne of St Germain. Thence it was that they preferred all the risks of leaving Spain and the Indies in the hands of a Bourbon prince, the result of which, seventy years afterwards, brought England to the verge of ruin in consequence. Thence it is that they have incurred the merited condemnation of all subsequent ages.

It is difficult, however, to see even a plausible reason on the surface of things for the conduct of Great Britain in 1834, in violating the Treaty of Utrecht, and forming the Quadruple Alliance with France, for the purpose of dispossessing the *male* line, which she had herself established in Spain, as a security against its

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41.

What
course the
Tories
should have
pursued at
the Treaty
of Utrecht.

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42.

But no excuse can be found for our violation of the Treaty of Utrecht by the Quadruple Alliance in 1834.

crown falling into the hands of a French prince, and establishing the *female* succession in its stead. Was it that the experience of the preceding forty years had shown that revolutionary dynasties were so very stable, revolutionary passions so very durable, revolutionary jealousy so slight, that it was necessary to violate our faith plighted at Utrecht, in order to establish a lasting democratic sovereign power in the Peninsula? Was it that revolutionary governments had been found by experience to be so strict and honourable in their dealings, so correct and punctual in their payments, so abhorrent to anything like repudiation of debts, that it was for the interest of the commercial and money-lending state to uphold their establishment? Was it that the annals of the French Revolution had demonstrated that the universal suffrage by which the Spanish Cortes was elected, was so very safe and workable a state engine that it might securely be intrusted to the fiery passions of Spain, in its apprenticeship to freedom? Was it that we were so very secure, that a queen or princess of Spain, heiress-presumptive to the throne, would not attract the notice and win the regard of a prince of France; and that thus even the slender security provided by the treaty of Utrecht against the union of the two crowns on the same head, might not be entirely destroyed? Was it that French princes had been proved by history to be so singularly repulsive in their manners, or ungainly in their appearance, that there was no risk of their attracting the notice of the heiress of Spain? We know not what the motive was which led this nation to interfere in breaking through the male succession as settled by the treaty of Utrecht, and establishing the female line in its stead. We know only that the thing

was done, and by ourselves. It is for the authors of the Quadruple Alliance of 1834 to explain its motives, and point out its advantages.

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The common argument used on this head—viz., that the young Queen, to whom the crown of Spain had been bequeathed by Ferdinand VII., had been acknowledged by the Cortes and constitutional authorities in Spain, and that we, a constitutional monarchy, could not oppose a sovereign of the people's choice—is obviously devoid of foundation. The settlement of the crown of Spain on the male line, by the Treaty of Utrecht, was a *public act* guaranteed by *all the powers of Europe*, for purposes of general policy, and the preservation of the balance of power. It was meant to guard against the precise danger which has since occurred—viz., the marriage of a Spanish princess, heiress-presumptive to the throne, to a prince of France. Serious deliberations, a Congress of all the powers which had signed the Treaty of Utrecht, were requisite, before the main security it provided against the dangers which had rendered the War of the Succession necessary was abandoned. But nothing of that sort was thought of. The thing was done at once, without either congress or deliberation, and in defiance of a solemn protest by Don Carlos, as the head of the male line, against such an invasion of his rights and those of his family. The northern powers of Europe have never yet recognised the female line in Spain. And yet the English nation never seems to have been awakened to the impolicy, as well as bad faith, of these proceedings, till a Spanish princess, as the result to be naturally expected from such a splendid endowment of English creation, dropt into the arms of a prince of France.

43.

Answer to
the common
argument
used in be
half of the
Quadruple
Alliance.

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44.

Our active
interference
to put down
Don Carlos
and the
male line
was still
more unjusti-
fiable.

But the matter does not rest here : it would be well for the honour and future fate of England if it did. We not only recognised the Queen of Spain in defiance of the Treaty of Utrecht, but we concluded with France the Quadruple Alliance, to uphold her and the Queen of Portugal on the throne, in opposition to the male and legitimate line in both countries. We followed this up by an armed intervention, to put down the Carlists and Royalists in the northern provinces. Lord John Hay was sent with the royal marines ; General Evans was *allowed* to go with ten thousand volunteers, armed with Tower muskets, and in the scarlet uniform. Warlike stores, to the amount of £450,000, were sent to Queen Christina in the space of three years. We thus succeeded, after a dreadful civil war of four years' duration, in beating down the heroic mountaineers in the Basque provinces, and fixing a dynasty hateful to nine-tenths of the Spanish nation on the throne of Madrid. Was this non-intervention ? Was this following up the principles of our Revolution, that every nation may choose its own dynasty ? Did we not rather imitate the conduct of Louis XIV., who, for twenty years, strove to impose the Chevalier St George and the Stuart line on an unwilling people ? Can there be a doubt that, if the Spaniards and Portuguese had been *let alone* by France and England, the revolutionary dynasty of queens, with all its attendant dangers of French princes, would long since have been sunk to the earth in both parts of the Peninsula ? If not, why did we interfere and nourish for four long years a frightful civil war on the Ebro ? In concluding the Quadruple Alliance, and aiding the Spanish revolutionists to establish a queen upon the throne of Madrid, we forced a hated dynasty upon an

unwilling nation, as much as the French say the Allies did, when, in 1815, they restored the Bourbons to the throne of France by the force of English and Prussian bayonets. And we acted not less in opposition to the principles of our own Revolution, than to the national faith pledged at Utrecht, and the plainest national interests, demonstrated by the most important events of the subsequent period.

What we should have done is quite plain. It was prescribed alike by national faith and public expedience. We should have done what Cardinal Mazarin did during the English, Mr Pitt during the early part of the French, Revolution. We should have interfered *in favour of neither the one party nor the other*, but, preserving a strict neutrality, recognised and continued the national treaties with that government which the nation ultimately adopted, as the one suited to the wishes, and protective of the interests, of the majority of its inhabitants. If driven by necessity to interfere, it should have been in support of that line of descent which our own security and the interests of Europe required, and the faith of treaties guaranteed, rather than of that which endangered the former and violated the latter. We did none of these things. We interfered, by the weight of diplomacy and the force of arms, to force a hateful democratic regime upon a people whose hearts were essentially monarchical; and we succeeded in establishing a government at Madrid against the wishes of nine-tenths of the people of the country.

We now see the result. We have received our just punishment in beholding the consummation of the Montpensier alliance, and the dream of Louis XIV. and Napoleon realised, by the extension of French influence

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45.

What England should have done on the occasion.

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46.
Just punishment we
have now
received.

from the Scheldt to Gibraltar. At one blow we have undone the whole work of the wars of the Succession and the Revolution. We have lost, by a single act, the fruit of the victories of Marlborough and the triumphs of Wellington. The barrier in the Netherlands, the counterpoise in the Peninsula, have been alike lost, or rather their weight has been added to the power of our enemies. England sees clearly enough *now* the erroneous policy in which her rulers have got themselves involved, and the manner in which they have played into the hands of our enemies ; but she does not see as yet where the fault really lay, and of what we really ought to be ashamed. She is ashamed of having been deceived, but not of having been the deceiver. It is for the latter, however, she should really feel humiliation. To be duped in negotiation, as to be outdone in love, is no unusual occurrence ; it occurs equally in public and private life, not less to the deserving than the undeserving. Diplomatic cunning is frequently the resource of the weak against the strong, of the perfidious against the unsuspecting. To break treaties, oppress allies, and foment direful civil wars, for the propagation of political opinions, or supposed party advantages—these are the real offences for which nations must answer, and which call down a righteous retribution upon their rulers and themselves.

47.
England
has lost all
title to com-
plain of any
violation of
the Treaty
of Utrecht.

By the course which England has of late years adopted in regard to Spain, she has deprived herself of all title to complain, even of any real violation of the Treaty of Utrecht by any other power. Having set the first example of setting aside its provisions, in the essential article of the succession to the throne, she can no longer with effect upbraid France for infringement of it

in inferior particulars. But in truth, Louis Philippe, in the Montpensier marriage, violated none of the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht : whether he deviated from any promises made at the Château d'Eu is a matter of comparatively little importance, concerning which the statesmen of the two countries are at variance. There is no prohibition in the Treaty of Utrecht of the marriage of French princes with Spanish princesses, or *vice versa*; there is not a word said about such marriages at all. It was as unnecessary as it would have been ungracious ; for when the succession to the crown of Madrid was strictly entailed on heirs male, no prince of the French blood, by marrying an Infanta of Spain, could endanger the peace of Europe by succeeding, through her, to the throne. Accordingly, numerous instances have since occurred of such marriages, without their having excited any attention, or been ever deemed infringements of the Treaty of Utrecht.*

But when England joined with France, in 1834, to alter the order of succession in Spain, and to force a

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* Such marriages between French princes and Spanish princesses took place on the 21st January 1721, and the 25th August 1739 ; and on the 23d January 1745, the Dauphin of France married the princess who, but for the Treaty of Utrecht excluding the female line, would have been heiress of the crown of Spain. But on none of these occasions was it ever supposed any infringement of the Treaty of Utrecht had taken place, or any danger to the balance of power in Europe had occurred. Nay, Louis XV. was publicly, and with the knowledge of the whole of Europe, affianced, early in life, to the Infanta of Spain. The Spanish princess was brought and lived long at Versailles, in order to be initiated into the duties of French royalty ; and the match was at length broken off, not from any remonstrance on the part of the English ambassador or the diplomatic body in Europe, but because the princess being six years younger than the French king, who was nineteen years of age, his subjects were too impatient for his marriage—were too impatient to wait till it could with propriety be solemnised ; and he married, in consequence, Maria Leckzinski, daughter of the King of Poland.—See DE TOCQUEVILLE'S *Hist. de Louis XV.*, i., p. 172.

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48.

Great
change
which the
substitution
of the fe-
male line
for the male
in Spain
made in this
respect on
the interests
of other
powers.

dynasty of queens, surrounded by Republican institutions, on an unwilling people, the case was entirely altered. The marriage of a prince of France with an infanta of Spain became then a matter of the very highest importance; it threatened the precise danger which the War of the Succession was undertaken to avert, which the Treaty of Utrecht was concluded to prevent, though it did so only imperfectly. There is, indeed, in that treaty the most express prohibition against the crowns of France and Spain being united on the same head; but that is neither the real danger to be dreaded, nor has England left herself any means of preventing it. It is the "Family Alliance" now concluded which is the real evil; and if the succession to the Spanish crown should open to any future King of the French, in consequence of it, how could we, who, in defiance of the Treaty of Utrecht, have opened to the Infanta the succession to the throne, object to his ascending it? We have fallen into the pit which we ourselves dug; we have been punished by the work of our own hands—another among the numerous proofs which contemporary as well as past history affords, that there is a moral superintendence of the affairs of men, and that great violations of national duty work out, in the national consequences to which they lead, a just retribution upon the third and fourth generations.

49.

The danger
of the Span-
ish alliance
is unchanged
by the Re-
volution of
1848.

The subsequent change which has taken place in the government of France has neither removed nor alleviated these dangers. The Orleans dynasty may be dispossessed from the throne; a Republic may succeed; a consul or a president may wield its power instead of a king—it is the same: the evil has been done, and cannot be undone. A family compact may subsist equally between

affiliated republics as between connected sovereigns ; a revolutionary dynasty will never fail on a crisis to look for support in governments having the same origin, and actuated by the same interests. They will never cease to regard England with envy and jealousy, the greater, because she has achieved a combination of general freedom with stability of government, which they have been unable to effect. When a war of opinion arises—as arise it will and must in Europe—the revolutionary governments will adhere to each other, and their hostility will be mainly directed against this country. By establishing a revolutionary government on the thrones of the Peninsula, we secured a cordial and steady ally to France in every contest that may arise with the legitimate powers ; the family compact between France and Spain, which Harley and Bolingbroke bequeathed, by the peace of Utrecht, to these powers in the eighteenth, will be succeeded by a *national compact*, from the policy of Grey and Palmerston in forming the Quadruple Alliance, in the nineteenth century. When England next faces her Continental foes, and contends for her existence on the waves, whether her enemies are directed by an emperor, a king, a president, or a consul, the fleets by which she will be menaced will issue not only from Brest and Cherburg, but from Antwerp and Ostend, from Ferrol and Cadiz ; and her faithful allies, in her greatest and most glorious struggle, will, by her own act, be converted into her bitterest and most formidable enemies.

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CHAPTER XII.

MARLBOROUGH—EUGENE—FREDERICK—NAPOLEON—WELLINGTON.

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1.
Change in
the system
of war in
Marlbo-
rough's
time.

THE extraordinary merit of Marlborough's military talents will not be duly appreciated, unless the peculiar nature of the contest he was called on to direct, and the character which it assumed in his time, is taken into consideration. The era of feudalism had ceased—at least so far as the raising of a military force by its machinery was concerned. Louis XIV., indeed, when pressed for men, more than once summoned the *ban* and the *arrière ban* of France to his standards, and he always had a gallant array of feudal nobility in his ante-chambers, or around his headquarters. But war, both on his part and on that of his antagonists, was carried on, generally speaking, with standing armies, and supported by the belligerent state. The vast, though generally tumultuary, array which the Plantagenet or Valois sovereigns summoned to their support, but which, bound only to serve for forty days, generally disappeared before a few months of hostilities were over, could no longer be relied on. The modern system, invented by Revolutionary France, of making war maintain war, and sending forth starving multitudes with arms in their hands, to subsist by the plunder of the adjoining states, was

unknown. The national passions had not been roused, which alone could bring it into operation. The decline of the feudal system forbade the hope that contests could be maintained by the chivalrous attachment of a faithful nobility: the democratic spirit had not been so aroused as to supply its place by popular fervour. Religious passions, indeed, had been strongly excited; but they had prompted men rather to suffer than to act: the disputations of the pulpit were their natural arena; in the last extremity, they were more allied to the resignation of the martyr than the heroism of the soldier. Between the feudal and the democratic eras there extended a long period of above a century and a half, during which governments had acquired the force, and mainly relied on the power, of standing armies; but the resources at their disposal for the support of these were so limited that the greatest economy in the husbanding both of men and money was indispensable.

Richard Cœur-de-Lion, Edward III., and Henry V., were the models of feudal leaders, and their wars were a faithful mirror of the feudal contests. Setting forth at the head of a force, which, if not formidable in point of numbers, was generally extremely so from equipment and the use of arms, the nobles around them were generally too proud and high-spirited to decline a combat, even on any possible terms of disadvantage. They took the field, as the knights went to a *champ clos*, to engage their adversaries in single conflict; and it was deemed equally dishonourable to retire without fighting from the one as the other. But they had no permanent force at their disposal to secure a lasting result, even from the greatest victories. The conquest of a petty province, a diminutive fortress, was often their

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2.
Nature of
the feudal
wars.

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only result. Hence the desperate battles, so memorable in warlike annals, which they fought, and hence the miserable and almost nugatory results which almost invariably followed the greatest triumphs. Cressy, Poitiers, and Azincour, followed by the expulsion of the English from France; Methven and Dunbar, by their ignominious retreat from Scotland; Ascalon and Ptolemais, by their being driven from the Holy Land, must immediately occur to every reader. This state of war necessarily imprinted a corresponding character on the feudal generals. They were high-spirited and daring in action—often skilful in tactics—generally ignorant of strategy—covetous of military renown, but careless of national advancement—and often more solicitous to conquer an adversary in single conflict, than to reduce a fortress or win a province.

3.
Great
change
when armies
were paid
by Govern-
ment.

But when armies were raised at the expense, not of nobles, but of kings—when their cost became a lasting and heavy drain on the royal exchequer, and they were yet felt to be indispensable to national security—sovereigns grew desirous of a more durable and profitable result from their victories. Standing armies, though commonly powerful—often irresistible when accumulated in large bodies—were yet extremely expensive. Their expense was felt the more from the great difficulty of getting the people in every country, at that period, to submit to any considerable amount of direct taxation. More than one flourishing province had been lost, or powerful monarchy overturned, in the attempt to increase such burdens; as, for example, the loss of Holland to Spain, and the execution of Charles I. in England. In this dilemma, arising from the experienced necessity of raising standing armies on the one hand, and the extreme

difficulty of permanently providing for them on the other, the only resource was to spare both the blood of the soldiers and the expenses of the government as much as possible. Durable conquests, acquisitions of towns and provinces which could yield revenues and furnish men, became the great object of ambition. The point of feudal honour was forgotten in the inanity of its consequences; the benefits of modern conquests were felt in the reality of their results. A *methodical* cautious system of war was thus made imperative upon generals by the necessities of their situation, and the objects expected from them by their respective governments. To risk little and gain much, became the great object: skill and stratagem gradually took the place of reckless daring; and the reputation of a general came to be measured rather by the permanent addition which, at a little cost in men or money, his successes made to the revenues of his sovereign, than by the note with which the trumpet of Fame proclaimed his own exploits.

Turenne was the first, and, in his day, the greatest general in this new and scientific system of war. He first applied to the military art the resources of prudent foresight, deep thought, and profound combination; and the results of his successes completely justified the discernment which had prompted Louis XIV. to place him at the head of his armies. His methodical and far-seeing campaigns in Flanders, Franche-Comté, Alsace, and Lorraine, in the early part of the reign of that monarch, added these valuable provinces of France, which have never since been lost. His conquests have proved more durable than those of the great Emperor, all of which were lost during the lifetime of their author. Napoleon's legions passed like a desolating whirlwind

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1714.

4.
Turenne
introduced
this system,
and brought
it to perfec-
tion.

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¹ See Montholon, vol. i. p. 74, 85.

5.
Character
of Condé.

over Europe, but they gave only fleeting celebrity, and entailed lasting wounds on France. Turenne's slow, or more methodical and cautious conquests, have proved lasting acquisitions to the monarchy. Nancy still owns the French allegiance ; Besançon and Strasbourg are to this day two of its frontier fortresses ; Lille is yet a leading stronghold in its iron barrier. Napoleon, it is well known, had the highest possible opinion of Turenne. He was disposed to place him at the head of modern generals ; and his very interesting analysis of his campaigns is not the least important part of his invaluable memoirs.¹

Condé, though living in the same age, and alternately the enemy and comrade of Turenne, belonged to a totally different class of generals, and, indeed, seemed to pertain to another age of the world. He was warmed by the spirit of chivalry ; he bore its terrors on his sword's point. Heart and soul he was heroic. Like Clive or Alexander, he was consumed by that thirst for fame, that ardent passion for glorious achievements, which is the invariable characteristic of elevated, and the most inconceivable quality to ordinary minds. In the prosecution of this object no difficulties could deter, no dangers daunt him. Though his spirit was chivalrous, though cavalry was the arm which suited his genius, and in which he chiefly delighted, he brought to the military art the might of genius and the resources of art ; and no man could make better use of the power which the expiring spirit of feudality bequeathed to its scientific successors. He destroyed the Spanish infantry at Rocroy and Lens, not by mere desultory charges of the French horse, but by efforts of that gallant body as skillfully directed as those by which Hannibal overthrew the

Roman legions at Trasymene and Cannæ. His genius was animated by the spirit of the fourteenth, but it was guided by the knowledge of the seventeenth, century.

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1714.

Bred in the school of Turenne, placed, like him, at the head of a force raised with difficulty, and maintained with still greater trouble, Marlborough was the greatest general of the methodical or scientific school which modern Europe has produced. He united the combinations of Turenne to the daring of Condé. No man knew better the importance of deeds which fascinate the minds of men ; none could decide quicker, or strike harder, when the proper time for doing so arrived. None, when the decisive crisis of the struggle approached, could expose his person more fearlessly, or lead his reserves more gallantly into the very hottest of the enemy's fire. To his combined intrepidity and quickness in thus bringing the reserves, at the decisive moment, into action, all his wonderful victories, and in particular Ramilies and Malplaquet, are to be ascribed. But, in the ordinary case, he preferred the bloodless methods of skill and arrangement. Combination was his great *forte* ; and in this he was not exceeded by Napoleon himself. To deceive the enemy as to the real point of attack—to perplex him by marches and countermarches—to assume and constantly maintain the initiative—to win by skill what could not be achieved by force, was his great delight ; and in that, the highest branch of the military art, he was unrivalled in modern times. He did not despise stratagem. Like Hannibal, he resorted to that arm frequently, and with never-failing success. His campaigns, in that respect, bear a closer resemblance to those of the illustrious Carthaginian than to those of any general in modern Europe. Like him, too, his adminis-

6.
Peculiar
character of
Marlbo-
rough as a
general.

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trative and diplomatic qualities were equal to his military powers. By his winning manners he retained in unwilling, but still effective union, an alliance, unwieldy from its magnitude, and discordant by its jealousies ; and kept, in willing multitudes, around his standards, a *colluvies omnium gentium*, of various languages, habits, and religion—held in subjection by nothing else but the strong bond of admiration for their general, and a desire to share in his triumphs.

7.
His extra-
ordinary
prudence
and address.

Consummate address, and never-failing prudence, especially characterised the English commander. With such judgment did he measure his strength against that of his adversary—so skilfully did he choose the points of attack, whether in strategy or tactics—so well weighed were all his enterprises, and so admirably prepared the means of carrying them into execution, that none of his arrangements ever miscarried. It was a common saying at the time, and the preceding narrative amply justifies it, that he never fought a battle which he did not gain, nor laid siege to a town which he did not take. This extraordinary and unbroken success extended, during nine campaigns, to all his manœuvres, however trivial ; and it has been already noticed, that the first disaster of any moment which occurred to his arms during that long period, so chequered with disaster to others, was the destruction of a convoy destined for the siege of St Venant, in October 1710, by one of Villars' detachments. A combination of daring in design, with caution and wisdom in execution, was his great characteristic. The councils of war and the field deputies of Holland, to whom he submitted his projects for consideration, never failed to object to them from the extreme hazard with which they were attended ;

subsequent times have supposed that they must have been attended with no hazard, from the uniform success with which they were carried out. It was the admirable powers of arrangement and combination which he brought to bear on all parts of his army, equally from the highest to the lowest, which was the cause of this extraordinary and uninterrupted success.

He was often outnumbered by the enemy, and was always opposed by a homogeneous army, animated by one strong national and military spirit ; while he was himself at the head of a discordant array of many different nations, some of them with little turn for warlike exploit, others lukewarm, or even treacherous in the cause. But, notwithstanding this, he never lost the ascendant. From the time when he first began the war on the banks of the Maese in 1702, till his military career was closed in 1711, within the iron barrier of France, by the intrigues of his political opponents at home, he never abandoned the initiative. He was constantly on the offensive. When inferior in force, as he often was, he supplied the deficiency of military strength by skill and combination : when his position was endangered by the errors or treachery of others, as was still more frequently the case, he waited till a false move on the part of his adversaries enabled him to retrieve his affairs by some brilliant and decisive stroke. It was thus that he restored the war in Germany, after the cause of the Emperor had been wellnigh ruined, by means of the brilliant cross-march into Bavaria, and the splendid victory at Blenheim. Thus also he gained Flanders for the Archduke by the stroke at Ramilies, when the affairs of the Allies there wore the most unpromising aspect ; and regained it at Oudenarde, after the

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8.

Though inferior in force, he always maintained the initiative.

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9.
Nature of
war in the
time of
Marlbo-
rough.

Imperial cause in that quarter had been all but lost by the treacherous surrender of Ghent and Bruges, in the very centre of his water-communications.

War, in the days of Marlborough, was a totally different art from what it had been, or afterwards became. The conqueror neither swept over the world with the fierce tempest of Scythian war, nor mastered it by the steady superiority of Roman discipline. No vehement and universal passions had brought whole nations into the field ; mankind were roused neither by the fanaticism of Mahommedan delusion, nor by the dreams of French democracy. Europe had not risen up as one man to shake off the cruel despotism of a Napoleon. The forces of the powers on either side were very nearly matched ; and the armies which their generals led into action were almost constantly equal to each other. Any superiority that did exist in point of numbers was almost invariably on the side of the French ; and, in the homogeneous quality of their troops, they always had the advantage. Success in these nicely-balanced circumstances could be gained only by superiority of skill ; and the smiles of fortune were reserved, not for the most daring, but the most judicious. A campaign resembled a protracted game at chess between two players of nearly equal ability, in which the antagonists set out at first uniformly with equal forces, and the victory could only be gained by a skilful plan laid on the one side, or the felicitous advantage taken of a false move on the other. The campaigns of Marlborough and Villars or Vendôme were exactly of this description. And perhaps in no other contests, since the dawn of the military art, was so much talent exerted by the commanders on either side, or was success so

evidently the result of the superior generalship of the one who in the end proved victorious.

Prudence and circumspection in the conduct of such a war were not less imposed on Marlborough by his situation than they were in unison with his character. The general of a coalition has one duty which beyond all others it behoves him to discharge, and that is, if possible, to avoid disaster. The leader of the troops of a popular state must always regard his domestic enemies at home at least as formidable as those to whom he is opposed in the field. They proved more so to Marlborough; he conquered France and Louis XIV., but he was overturned by the Tories and Bolingbroke. Such are the jealousies of governments, so diverse and opposite the interests of nations, that a coalition, unless in the tumult of un hoped-for success, or under the terrors of instant danger, is always on the verge of dissolution. It proved so both with that which Marlborough led, and that which Castlereagh guided. A single considerable disaster at once breaks it up. Long-continued success, by averting danger, has not less certainly the same effect. Of every coalition it may be truly said, as Wellington, in a moment of irritation, said of the English army, that it "is liable to be dissolved equally by victory or defeat." The general of a confederacy is constantly surrounded by lukewarm selfish allies ready to fall off, and envenomed domestic factions ready to fall on. Such was the position of Marlborough; such, a century afterwards, was the situation of Wellington. Unbroken success was to both the condition of existence. Marlborough was ruined by the indecisive result of the campaign of 1711; Wellington all but ruined by the retreat from Talavera in 1809. A fourth part

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10.

Circum-
spection
was in him
a matter of
necessity.

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of the defeats from which Frederick or Napoleon recovered, and which were the price at which they purchased their astonishing triumphs, would, from the clamour they raised at home, have destroyed Marlborough or Wellington. A despotic monarch commanding his own armies can afford to be daring in the field, for he has to take counsel only from the intrepidity of his own breast; the general of a coalition must be circumspect, for he is dependant on the fears, and liable to be thwarted by the jealousies, of others.

11.
He was
compelled
to adopt the
system of
sieges, and
fix the war
in Flanders.

The same necessity was the cause of the adoption of the system of sieges, and of the fixing of the war in Flanders, which formed such striking features in the military career of Marlborough. This matter has been the subject of extraordinary misconception, and unbounded misrepresentation, from the contemporary period to the present time. It was said, that, in attacking the enemy in the Low Countries, he took the bull by the horns, while in assaulting him from Lorraine or Alsace, he would have taken him on his defenceless side; and the successful results of the invasions of 1814 and 1815 are referred to as proving what may be expected from disregarding frontier fortresses, and striking at once at the heart of the enemy's power. Those who make these remarks would do well to consider what force Marlborough had at his disposal to make such a daring invasion. He was almost *constantly inferior to the enemy's army immediately opposed to him*. The successes which he gained were entirely the result of superior skill in strategy or tactics on his part; their constant recurrence made men forget, and has made posterity forget, the extraordinary difficulties

which had to be overcome before they were attained. If we would see what would have been the issue of the war if his tutelary arm and far-seeing genius had been wanting, we have only to look at Denain and the campaign of 1712, even when the ardent genius of Eugene directed the Allied forces.

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1714.

To have invaded a compact monarchy like France, possessing such vast military resources, and animated by so strong a military spirit, with an inferior force, leaving the whole triple line of frontier fortresses behind, would have been to expose the Allied army to certain destruction. It must have left half its numbers behind to blockade the fortresses and keep up the communications; the enemy's force, by falling back to the centre of his resources, would have been doubled. Arrived on the Oise, Marlborough would have found himself with fifty thousand men in presence of a hundred thousand. The result of the invasions of Germany in 1704 by Tallard, of France in 1792 by the Duke of Brunswick, of Russia in 1812 by Napoleon, demonstrate the extreme danger of penetrating into an enemy's country, even with the greatest force, without adequate regard to the communications of the invading army. The cases of 1814 and 1815, when a million of experienced soldiers fell on a single and exhausted state, is the exception, not the rule; and their narrow escape from defeat in the first of these years proves the hazard of such a proceeding. By assailing France on the side of the Low Countries, and working by degrees through its iron frontier, Marlborough took the only certain way of bringing down its power, because he *secured his rear as he advanced*, and reduced the enemy's strength by the successive captures of the frontier garrisons, till,

12.

Dangers of
the opposite
system.

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13.
Reasons
why Marl-
borough's
genius was
underrated
in his life.

when the line was broken through, like a knight when his armour was uncased, it lay without defence.

Lord Chesterfield, who knew him well, said that Marlborough was a man of excellent parts, and strong good sense, but of no very shining genius. The uninterrupted success of his campaigns, however, joined to the unexampled address with which he allayed the jealousies and stilled the discords of the confederacy whose armies he led, decisively demonstrates that the polished earl's opinion was not a just one, and that his partiality for the graces led him to ascribe an undue influence in the great duke's career to the inimitable suavity and courtesy of his manner. His enterprises and stratagems, his devices to deceive the enemy, and counterbalance inferiority of force by superiority of conduct; the eagle eye which in the decisive moment he brought to bear on the field of battle, and the rapidity with which in person he struck the final blow from which the enemy never recovered, bespeak the intuitive genius of war. It was the admirable *balance* of his mental qualities which caused his originality to be undervalued: no one power stood out in such bold relief as to overshadow all the others, and rivet the eye by the magnitude of its proportions. Thus his consummate judgment made the world overlook his invention; his uniform prudence caused his daring to be forgotten; his incomparable combinations often concealed the capacious mind which had put the whole in motion. He was so invariably successful that men forgot how difficult it is always to succeed in war. It was not till he was withdrawn from the conduct of the campaign, when disaster immediately attended the Allied arms, and France resumed the ascendant over the coalition, that

Europe became sensible who had been its soul, and how much had been lost when his mighty understanding was no longer at the head of affairs.

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Lord Bolingbroke, whose great abilities caused him to discern exalted merit, even through all the mists of party prejudice, said that Marlborough was the "perfection of genius, matured by *experience*." He did not say by *knowledge*. This was really his character : Bolingbroke has said neither more nor less than the truth. Marlborough had received a very limited education ; he had never been at a university ; he had none of the varied and extensive erudition which enriched the minds of his great rivals in politics, St John and Harley. Thrown into the guards at the age of sixteen, having been previously only at a grammar school, and afterwards a page to the Duke of York, he entered upon life without any of the vast advantages which knowledge affords. What he subsequently gained was acquired in courts and camps. It is the strongest proof of the extraordinary strength and sagacity of his mind, that with such limited advantages he became what he was—the first in arms, and second to none in politics, of the age in which he lived. He made admirable use of the opportunities he afterwards enjoyed. In the school of Turenne he imbibed the art of war ; in the palace of St James's he learned the mysteries of courts ; in the House of Peers, and at the Hague, he became master of the art of diplomacy. In these varied situations he acquired the knowledge, of all others the most valuable, which can nowhere be learned so well, because nowhere is its weakness so clearly brought out by temptation—that of the world and the human heart. His career affords the most striking proof of how much the real

14.

He was the
perfection
of genius
matured by
experience.

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education of every mind depends upon itself, and how much it is in the power of strong sense, accompanied by vigilant observation in after life, to compensate the want of those advantages which, under more favourable circumstances, often give to early youth the benefit of the acquirements and experience of others.

15.
His great
address and
suavity of
manner.

A most inadequate opinion would be formed of Marlborough's mental character, if his military exploits alone are taken into consideration. Like all other intellects of the first order, he was equally capable of great achievements in peace as in war, and shone forth with not less lustre in the deliberations of the cabinet, or in the correspondence of diplomacy, than in directing columns on the field of battle, or tracing out the line of approaches for the attack of fortified towns. Nothing could exceed the judgment and temper with which he reconciled the jarring interests, and smoothed down the rival pretensions, of the coalesced cabinets. The danger was not so pressing as to unite their rival governments, as it afterwards did those of the Grand Alliance in 1813, which overthrew Napoleon; and incessant exertions, joined to the highest possible diplomatic address, judgment of conduct, and sauvity of manner, were required to prevent the coalition, on various occasions during the course of the war, from falling to pieces. As it was, the intrigues of Bolingbroke and the Tories in England, and the ascendancy of Mrs Masham in the Queen's bedchamber councils, at last counterbalanced all his achievements, and led to a peace which abandoned the most important objects of the war, and was fraught, as the event has proved, with serious danger to the independence, and even the existence, of England. His winter campaign at the Allied courts, as

he himself said, always equalled in duration, and often exceeded in importance and difficulty, that in summer with the enemy ; and nothing is more certain than that, if a man of less capacity had been intrusted with the direction of its diplomatic relations, the coalition would have soon broken up without having accomplished any of the objects for which the war had been undertaken, from the mere selfishness and dissensions of the cabinets by whom it was conducted.

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With one blot, for which the justice of history or the partiality of biography neither can nor should attempt to make any apology, Marlborough's private character seems to have been unexceptionable, and was evidently distinguished by several noble and amiable qualities. That he was bred a courtier, and owed his first elevation to the favour with which he was regarded by one of the King's mistresses, was not his fault ;—it arose, perhaps, necessarily from his situation, and the graces and beauty with which he had been so prodigally endowed by nature. The young officer of the Guards, who in the army of Louis XIV. passed by the name of the handsome Englishman, could hardly be expected to be free from the consequences of female partiality at the court of Charles II. Shortly after the Revolution he was undoubtedly involved in many dark intrigues for the restoration of the exiled family : he seemed to be desirous to undo what he himself had done. It is the fatal effect of one deviation from rectitude that it renders subsequent ones almost unavoidable, or so confounds the moral sense as to make their turpitude be unfelt. But in maturer years, his conduct in public, after Anne had placed him in high command, was uniformly consistent, straightforward, and honourable. He

16.

His character as a statesman.

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1714.

17.
And in
private.

was a sincere patriot, and ardently attached both to his country and to the principles of freedom, at a time when both were wellnigh forgotten in the struggles of party, and the fierce contests for royal or popular favour.

Though bred up in a licentious court, and early exposed to the most entrancing of its seductions, he was in mature life strictly correct, both in his conduct and conversation. He resisted every temptation to which his undiminished beauty exposed him after his marriage, and was never known either to utter, or permit to be uttered in his presence, a light or indecent expression. His uniform attention to the comforts of the men won the hearts of his soldiers : his invariable humanity extorted the praises of his enemies. He discouraged to the utmost degree all intemperance and licentiousness in his soldiers, and constantly laboured to impress upon them a sense of moral duty and Supreme superintendence. Divine service was regularly performed in all his camps, both morning and evening ; previous to a battle, prayers were read at the head of every regiment, and the first act, after a victory, was a solemn thanksgiving. "By those means," says a contemporary biographer, who served in his army, "his camp resembled a quiet, well-governed city. Cursing and swearing were seldom heard among the officers ; a drunkard was the object of scorn ; and even the soldiers, many of them the refuse and dregs of the nation, became, at the close of one or two campaigns, tractable, civil, sensible, and clean, and had an air and spirit above the vulgar."¹

¹ Coxe, vi.
396, 397.

18.
His political
character
after the
Revolution.

In political life, during his career after the Revolution, he was consistent and firm ; faithful to his party, but more faithful still to his country. He was a generous friend, an attached, perhaps a too fond, husband. During

the whole of his active career, he retained a constant sense of the superintendence of the Supreme Being, and was ever the first to ascribe the successes which he had gained to Divine protection—a disposition which shone forth with peculiar grace amidst the din of arms and the flourish of trumpets for his own mighty achievements. Even the one occasion on which, like David, he fell from his high principles, will be regarded by the equitable observer with charitable, if not forgiving eyes. He will recollect, that perfection never yet belonged to a child of Adam ; he will measure the dreadful nature of the struggle which awaits an upright and generous mind when loyalty and gratitude impel one way, and religion and patriotism another. Without attempting to justify an officer who employs the power bestowed by one government to elevate another on its ruins, he will yet reflect, that in such a crisis, even the firmest heads and the best hearts may be led astray : he will recollect that, as already noticed, the heroic Ney, in another age, did the same. If he is wise, he will ascribe the fault—for fault it was—not so much to the individual, as to the time in which he lived ; and feel a deeper thankfulness that his own lot has been cast in a happier age, when the great moving passions of the human heart act in the same direction, and a public man need not fear that he is wanting in his duty to his sovereign, because he is performing that due to his country.

Marlborough, however, was but a man, and therefore not without the usual blemishes and weaknesses of humanity. The great blot on his character, the inexcusable act in his life—that of having accepted a command from James II., and afterwards betrayed him—will be found on examination to be but a part, though doubtless

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19.
His faults
and weak-
nesses.

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the most conspicuous one, of the prevailing disposition and secret weakness of his character. He was extremely ambitious, and little scrupulous about the means by which elevation was to be attained or prolonged. He repeatedly yielded to the solicitations of those around him, from the desire to avoid ruining his party, under circumstances when the dignity of his character required a more independent and resolute conduct. He was not by nature a bad, or by habit a dishonourable man, and yet he did a most base and dishonourable thing; he abandoned his King and benefactor when holding an important command under him. He did not possess the mental independence, the strong sense of rectitude, the keen feelings of honour, which lead pure and elevated minds to make shipwreck of their fortunes in the cause of duty. He was possessed by strong moral and religious principles, but when a crisis arrived they yielded to the whisperings of expedience; or rather, the deceitfulness of sin made him believe that his duty pointed to the course which his interest demanded. He had more of Cæsar in him than Cato. It never would be said of him—

"Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni."

20.
Circum-
stances
which pal-
liate these
faults in
him.

In justice to Marlborough, however, it must be recollected that he lived in an age of revolutions, when the crown had been recently twice subverted, and a new dynasty placed on the throne; when men's minds were confused and their ideas unhinged with regard to public duty; and when that fatal effect of revolutionary success had taken place—the assigning to public actions no other test but success. And yet, so mixed is the condition of mankind, and so great the ascendancy of selfishness in human affairs, that Marlborough's extraordinary rise and long-continued power is in great part to

be ascribed to these moral weaknesses in his character. Had he possessed the noble spirit of one of the old Cavaliers, he would have adhered to James in his misfortune, and become a respectable but unknown exile at St Germain, instead of the illustrious leader of the coalition. He thus affords another instance to the many which history affords of the truth of Johnson's saying, "That no man ever rose from a private station to exalted power amongst men, in whom great and commanding qualities were not combined with meannesses that would be inconceivable in ordinary life."

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1714.

Marlborough was often accused of avarice; but his conduct through life sufficiently demonstrated that in him the natural desire to accumulate a fortune, which belongs to every rational mind, was kept in subjection to more elevated principles. The great wealth which he acquired from his numerous appointments, and the royal and parliamentary rewards bestowed on him for his services, were sufficient to excite the envy of the vulgar, and this feeling was eagerly fed by those who pandered to their passions. Swift contrasted, in a popular diatribe, the scanty rewards of Roman triumph with the half million which had attested British gratitude. But there was no real foundation for this aspersion. His conduct belied it. His repeated refusal of the government of the Netherlands, with its magnificent appointment of £60,000 a-year, was a sufficient proof how much he despised money when it interfered with public duty; his splendid edifices, both in London and Blenheim, attest how little he valued it for any other purpose but as it might be applied to noble and worthy objects.* Like many other men who have been the

21.
His private
character
and elevated
ideas in the
disposal of
money.

* Marlborough's house in London cost about £100,000.—COXE, vi. 399.

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architects of their own fortune, he was economical in his habits, and little inclined to spend money on personal gratifications. But on great occasions he exhibited a splendour worthy of his station and his character ; he could give all the money in his possession to the wounded among his enemies, and present a friendless and deserving officer with a thousand pounds to purchase a commission.¹

¹ Coxe, vi.
400.

22.

His magna-
nimity and
humanity.

He possessed the magnanimity in judging of others which is the invariable characteristic of real greatness. Envy was unknown, suspicion loathsome to him. He often suffered by the generous confidence with which he trusted his enemies. He was patient under contradiction, placid and courteous both in his manners and demeanour, and owed great part of his success, both in the field and in the cabinet, to the invariable suavity and charm of his manners. His humanity was uniformly conspicuous. Not only his own soldiers, but his enemies, never failed to experience it. Like Wellington, his attention to the health and comforts of his men was incessant ; which, with his daring in the field, and uniform success in strategy, endeared him in the highest degree to the soldiers. Troops of all nations equally trusted him ; and the common saying, when they were in any difficulty, "Never mind, 'Corporal John' will get us out of it," was heard as frequently in the Dutch, Danish, or German, as in the English language. He frequently gave the weary soldiers a place in his carriage, and got out himself to accommodate more ; and his first care, after an engagement, invariably was to visit the field of battle, and do his utmost to assuage the sufferings of the wounded, both among his own men and those of the enemy.² After the battle of Malplaquet, he

² Capefigue,
Louis XIV.
vi. 129.

divided all the money at his private disposal among the wounded officers of the enemy.

The character of this illustrious man has been thus portrayed by two of the greatest writers in the English language, the latter of whom will not be accused of undue partiality to his political enemy. "It is a characteristic," says Adam Smith, "almost peculiar to the great Duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterrupted and such splendid successes as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarce into a single rash word or expression. The same temperate coolness and self-command cannot, I think, be ascribed to any other great warrior of latter times, not to Prince Eugene, nor to the late King of Prussia, nor to the great Prince of Condé, nor even to Gustavus Adolphus. Turenne seems to have approached the nearest to it; but several actions of his life demonstrate that it was in him by no means so perfect as in the great Duke of Marlborough." "By King William's death," says Bolingbroke, "the Duke of Marlborough was raised to the head of the army, and indeed of the confederacy, where he, a private man, a subject, obtained by merit and by management a more decided influence than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain, had given to King William. Not only all the parts of that vast machine, the Grand Alliance, were kept more compact and entire, but a more rapid and vigorous motion was given to the whole; and instead of languishing or disastrous campaigns, we saw every scene of the war full of action.¹ All those wherein he appeared, and many of those wherein he was not then an actor, but abettor, however, of their actions, were crowned with the most

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23.

His character as drawn by Adam Smith and Bolingbroke.

¹ Smith's Moral Sentiments, ii. 158. Bolingbroke's Letters on the Study of History, ii. 172.

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triumphant success. I take with pleasure this opportunity of doing justice to that great man, whose faults I know, whose virtues I admire, and whose memory, as the *greatest general and greatest minister that our country or any other has produced*, I honour."

24.
The five
great gene-
rals of mo-
dern times.

Five generals, by the common consent of men, stand forth pre-eminent in modern times for the magnitude of the achievements they effected, and the splendour of the talents they displayed — Eugene, Marlborough, Frederick, Napoleon, and Wellington. It is hard to say which appears the greatest, whether we regard the services they have rendered to their respective countries, or the durable impress their deeds have left on human affairs. All had difficulties the most serious to contend with, obstacles apparently insurmountable to overcome, and all proved in the brightest parts of their career victorious over them. All have immortalised their names by exploits far exceeding those recorded of other men. All have left the effects of their exploits durably imprinted in the subsequent fate of nations. The relative position of the European states, the preservation of public rights, the maintenance of the balance of power, the salvation of the weak from the grasp of the strong, have been mainly owing to their exertions. To their biography is attached not merely the fortune of the countries to which they belonged, but the general destinies of Europe, and through it of the human race.

25.
Leading
characteris-
tics of each.

To give a faithful picture, in a few pages, of such men, may seem a hopeless, and, compared to their merits, an invidious task. A brief summary of the chief actions of those of them least known to ordinary readers, is, however, indispensable to lay a foundation for their comparison with the character of those whose deeds are as

household words. It is not impossible to convey to those who are familiar with their exploits a pleasing *resumé* of their leading features and salient points of difference ; to those who are not, to give some idea of the pleasure which the study of their characters is calculated to afford. Generals, like writers or artists, have certain leading characteristics which may be traced through all their achievements ; a peculiar impress has been communicated by nature to their minds, which appears, not less than on the painter's canvass or in the poet's lines, in all their actions. As much as grandeur of conception distinguishes Homer, tenderness of feeling Virgil, sublimity of thought Milton, nobleness of character Tasso, does daring of design distinguish Eugene, perfection of combination Marlborough, invincible tenacity Frederick, vastness of genius Napoleon, profound wisdom Wellington. A summary of the characters of these illustrious men, a comparison of their excellencies, a glance at their failings, however imperfectly executed, will not be an unprofitable task, and form a fit conclusion to this history.

EUGENE's early history and great achievements in the War of the Succession, have been already detailed ; but it is hard to say whether his greatness did not appear more strongly in the magnanimity of his private life than in the brilliancy of his public actions. It has been already mentioned how noble and cordial was his co-operation with Marlborough, and how entirely destitute those great men were of jealousy toward each other. He gave equal proof of the magnanimity of his disposition, by the readiness with which he granted the most favourable terms to the illustrious besieged chief in Lille, who had, with equal skill and valour, conducted the defence.

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26.
Character
of Prince
Eugene.

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When the articles of capitulation proposed by Boufflers were placed before him, he said immediately, without looking at them, "I will subscribe them at once : knowing well you would propose nothing unworthy of you and me." The delicacy of his subsequent attentions to his noble prisoner evinced the sincerity of his admiration. When Marlborough's influence at the English court was sensibly declining, in 1711, he repaired to London, and exerted all his talents and address to bring the English council back to the common cause, and restore his great rival to his former ascendancy with Queen Anne. When it was all in vain, and the English armies withdrew from the coalition, Eugene did all that skill and genius could achieve to make up for the great deficiency arising from the withdrawal of Marlborough and his gallant followers ; and when it had become apparent that he was overmatched by the French armies, he was the first to counsel his Imperial master to conclude peace, which was done at Rastadt on the 6th March, 1714.

27.
His astonishing
successes over
the Turks.

Great as had been the services then performed by Eugene for the Imperialists, they were outdone by those which he subsequently rendered in the wars with the Turks. In truth it was he who first effectually broke their power, and for ever delivered Europe from the sabres of the Osmanlis, by which it had been incessantly threatened for three hundred years. Intrusted with the command of the Austrian army in Hungary, sixty thousand strong, he gained at Peterwardin, in 1716, a complete victory over a hundred and fifty thousand Turks. This glorious success led him to resume the offensive, and in the following year he laid siege, with forty thousand men, to Belgrade, the great frontier

fortress of Turkey, in presence of the whole strength of the Ottoman empire. The obstinate resistance of the Turks, as famous then as they have ever since been in the defence of fortified places, joined to the dysenteries and fevers usual on the marshy banks of the Danube in the autumnal months, soon reduced his effective force to twenty-five thousand men, while that of the enemy, by prodigious efforts, had been swelled to a hundred and fifty thousand around the besiegers' lines, besides thirty thousand within the walls.

Everything presaged that Eugene was about to undergo the fate of Marshal Marsin twelve years before at Turin, and even his most experienced officers deemed a capitulation the only way of extricating them from their perilous situation. Eugene himself was attacked and seriously weakened by the prevailing dysentery, and all seemed lost in the Austrian camp. It was in these circumstances, with this weakened and dispirited force, that he achieved one of the most glorious victories ever gained by the Cross over the Crescent. With admirable skill he collected his little army together, divided it into columns of attack, and, though scarcely able to sit on horseback, himself led them to the assault of the Turkish intrenchments. The result was equal to the success of Cæsar over the Gauls at the blockade of Alesia, seventeen centuries before. The innumerable host of the Turks was totally defeated—all their artillery and baggage was taken, and their troops were entirely dispersed. Belgrade, immediately after, opened its gates, and has since remained, with some mutations of fortune, the great frontier bulwark of Europe against the Turks.¹ The successes which he gained in the following campaign of 1718 were so decisive that they entirely broke the

CHAP.

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1714.

28.

Narrow escape from ruin, and wonderful victory at Belgrade.

¹ Biog. Univ. xiii. 482-491.

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1714.

Ottoman power; and he was preparing to march to Constantinople, when the treaty of Passarowitz put a period to his conquests, and gave a breathing time to the exhausted Ottoman empire.

29.
His character as a general, and parallel to Napoleon.

From this brief sketch of his exploits, it may readily be understood what was the character of Eugene as a general. He had none of the methodical prudence of Turenne, Marlborough, or Villars. His genius was entirely different; it was more akin to that of Napoleon, when he was reduced to counterbalance inferiority of numbers by superiority of skill. The immortal campaigns of 1796 in Italy, and of 1814 in Champagne, bear a strong resemblance to those of Eugene. Like the French Emperor, his strokes were rapid and forcible; his *coup-d'œil* was at once quick and just; his activity indefatigable; his courage undaunted; his resources equal to any undertaking. He did not lay much stress on previous arrangements, and seldom attempted the extensive combinations which enabled Marlborough to command success; but dashed fearlessly on, trusting to his own resources to extricate himself out of any difficulty—to his genius, in any circumstances, to command victory.

30.
Daring and skill with which he extricated himself from dangers.

Yet was this daring disposition not without peril. His audacity often bordered on rashness, his rapidity on haste; and he repeatedly brought his armies into situations all but desperate, and which, to a general of less capacity, would unquestionably have proved so. But in these difficulties no one could exceed him in the energy and vigour with which he extricated himself from the toils; and many of his greatest victories, particularly those of Turin and Belgrade, were gained under circumstances where even the boldest officers in his army had given him over for lost. He was prodigal of the blood

of his soldiers, and, like Napoleon, indifferent to the sacrifices at which he purchased his successes ; but he was still more lavish of his own, and never failed to share the hardships and dangers of the meanest of his followers. Engaged during his active life in thirteen pitched battles, in all he fought like a common soldier. He was in consequence repeatedly, sometimes dangerously, wounded ; and it was extraordinary that he escaped the reiterated perils to which he was exposed. He raised the Austrian monarchy by his triumphs to the very highest pitch of glory, and finally broke the power of the Turks, the most persevering and not the least formidable of its enemies. But the enterprises which his genius prompted the cabinet of Vienna to undertake were beyond the strength of the Hereditary States ; and for nearly a century after it accomplished nothing worthy, either of its growing resources, or of the military renown which he had achieved for it.

FREDERICK II., surnamed THE GREAT, with more justice than any other to whom that title has been applied in modern times, was born at Berlin on the 24th January 1712. His education was as much neglected as ill-directed. Destined from early youth for the military profession, he was, in the first instance, subjected to a discipline so rigorous that he conceived the utmost aversion for a career in which he was ultimately to shine with such lustre, and, as his only resource, threw himself with ardour into the study of French literature, for which he retained a strong predilection through the whole of his subsequent life. Unfortunately, his studies were almost entirely confined to that literature. That of his own country, since so illustrious, had not started into existence. Of Italian and Spanish he was

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1714.

31.
Early life
of Frederick
the Great.

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1714.

ignorant. He could not read Greek ; and with Latin his acquaintance was so imperfect as to be of no practical service to him through life. To this unfortunate contraction of his education, his limited taste in literature, in subsequent life, is chiefly to be ascribed. He at first was desirous of espousing an English princess ; but his father, who was most imperious in his disposition, decided otherwise, and he was compelled, in 1733, to marry the Princess Elizabeth of Brunswick. This union, like most others contracted under restraint, proved unfortunate ; and it did not give Frederick the blessing of an heir to the throne. Debarred from domestic enjoyments, the young prince took refuge with more eagerness than ever in literary pursuits ; the chateau of Rhinsberg, which was his favourite abode, was styled by him in his transport the “ Palace of the Muses ;” and the greatest general and most hardy soldier of modern times spent some years of his youth in corresponding with Maupertuis, Voltaire, and other French philosophers, and in making indifferent verses and madrigals, which gave no token of any remarkable genius. He had already prepared for the press a book entitled *Refutation of the Prince of Machiavel*, when, in 1740, the death of his father called him to the throne, its duties, its dangers, and its glory.

32.
His accession to the throne, and vigorous application to its duties.

The philosophers were in transports when they beheld “ one of themselves,” as they styled him, elevated to a throne ; they indulged in hopes that he would continue his literary pursuits, and acknowledge their influence, when surrounded by the attractions and wielding the patronage of the crown. They soon found their mistake. Frederick retained through life his literary tastes : he corresponded with Voltaire and the philosophers through all his campaigns ; he made French verses

in his tent, after tracing out the plans of the battles of Leuthen and Rosbach. But his heart was in his kingdom: his ambition was set on its aggrandisement: his passion was war, by which alone that aggrandisement could be achieved. Without being forgotten, the philosophers and madrigals were soon comparatively discarded. The finances and the army occupied his whole attention. The former were in excellent order, and his father had even accumulated a large treasure which remained in the exchequer. The army, admirably equipped and disciplined, already amounted to sixty thousand men: he augmented it to eighty thousand. Nothing could exceed the vigour he displayed in every department, or the unceasing attention he paid to public affairs. Indefatigable day and night, sober and temperate in his habits, he employed even artificial means to augment the time during the day he could devote to business. Finding that he was constitutionally inclined to more rest than he deemed consistent with the full discharge of all his regal duties, he ordered his servants to waken him at five in the morning; and if words were not effectual to rouse him from his sleep, he commanded them, on pain of dismissal, to apply linen steeped in cold water to his person. This order was punctually executed, even in the depth of winter, till nature was fairly subdued, and the king had gained the time he desired from his slumbers.

It was not long before he had an opportunity of evincing at once the vigour and unscrupulous character of his mind. The Emperor Charles VI. having died on the 20th October 1740, the immense possessions of the house of Austria devolved to his daughter, since so famous by the name of MARIA THERESA. The defence-

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1714.

33.

His aggression on and conquest of Silesia, and first victory at Mollwitz.

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1714.

less condition of the Imperial dominions, consisting of so many different and discordant states, some of them but recently united under one head, when under the guidance of a young and unmarried princess, suggested to the neighbouring powers the idea of a partition. Frederick eagerly united with France in this project. He revived some old and obsolete claims of Prussia to Silesia; but in his manifesto to the European powers, upon invading that province, he was scarcely at the pains to conceal the real motives of his aggression. "It is," said he, "an army ready to take the field, treasures long accumulated, and perhaps the desire to acquire glory." He was not long in succeeding in the object of his ambition, though it was at first rather owing to the skill of his generals, and discipline of his soldiers, than to his own capacity. On the 10th April 1741, the army under his command gained a complete victory over the Austrians at Mollwitz in Silesia, which led to the entire reduction of that rich and important province. The king owed little to his own courage, however, on this occasion. Like Wellington, the first essay in arms of so indomitable a hero was unfortunate. He fled from the field of battle at the first repulse of his cavalry; and he was already seven miles off, where he was resting in a mill, when he received intelligence that his troops had regained the day; and at the earnest entreaties of General (afterwards Marshal) Schwerin, he returned to take the command of the army.

34.
His glorious
successes
over the
Austrians.

Next year, however, he evinced equal courage and capacity in the battle of Czaslau, which he gained over the Prince of Lorraine. Austria, on the brink of ruin, hastened to disarm the most formidable of her assailants; and by a separate peace, concluded at Breslau on June

11, 1742, she ceded to Prussia nearly the whole of Silesia. This cruel loss, however, was too plainly the result of necessity to be acquiesced in without a struggle by the cabinet of Vienna. Maria Theresa made no secret of her determination to resume possession of the lost province on the first convenient opportunity. Austria soon united the whole of Germany in a league against Frederick, who had no ally but the King of France. Assailed by such a host of enemies, however, the young king was not discouraged, and, boldly assuming the initiative, he gained at Hohenfriedberg a complete victory over his old antagonist the Prince of Lorraine. This triumph was won entirely by the extraordinary genius displayed by the King of Prussia. "It was one of those battles," says the military historian Guibert, "where a great master makes everything give way before him, and which is gained from the very beginning, because he never gives the enemy time to recover from their disorder."¹

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1714.

¹ Art de la
Guerre, ii.
172.

The Austrians made great exertions to repair the consequences of this disaster, and with such success that in four months Prince Charles of Lorraine again attacked him, at the head of fifty thousand men, near Soor. Frederick had not twenty-five thousand, but with these he again defeated the Austrians with immense loss, and took up his winter-quarters in Silesia. So vast were the resources, however, of the great German League, of which Austria was the head, that they were enabled to keep the field during winter, and even meditated a *coup-de-main* against the king, in his capital of Berlin. Informed of this design, Frederick lost not a moment in anticipating it by a sudden attack on his part on his enemies. Assembling his troops in

35.
Who are
at length
obliged to
make peace.

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1714.

the depth of winter with perfect secrecy, he surprised a large body of Saxons at Naumberg, made himself master of their magazines at Gorlitz, and soon after made his triumphant entry into Dresden, where he dictated a glorious peace, on 25th December 1745, to his enemies, which permanently secured Silesia to Prussia. It was full time for the Imperialists to come to an accommodation. In eighteen months Frederick had defeated them in four pitched battles, besides several combats; taken forty-five thousand prisoners, and killed or wounded an equal number of his enemies. His own armies had not sustained losses to a fifth part of this amount, and the chasms in his ranks were more than compensated by the multitude of the prisoners who enlisted under his banners, anxious to share the fortunes of the hero who had already filled Europe with his renown.

36.
His decided
and indomitable
character already
appears.

The ambitious and decided, and, above all, indomitable character of Frederick, had already become conspicuous during these brief campaigns. His correspondence, all conducted by himself, evinced a vigour and a *tranchant* style at that period unknown in European diplomacy, but to which the world has since been abundantly accustomed in the proclamations of Napoleon. Already he spoke on every occasion as the hero and the conqueror—to conquer or die was his invariable maxim. On the eve of his invasion of Saxony, he wrote to the Empress of Russia, who was endeavouring to dissuade him from that design :—" I wish nothing from the King of Poland (Elector of Saxony) but to punish him in his Electorate, and make him sign an acknowledgment of repentance in his capital." During the negotiations for peace he wrote to the King of England, who had proposed the mediation of Great Britain :—" These are

my conditions. I will perish with my army before departing from one iota of them : if the Empress does not accept them, I will rise in my demands."

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1714.

The peace of Dresden lasted ten years ; and these were of inestimable importance to Frederick. He employed that precious interval in consolidating his conquests, securing the affections by protecting the interests of his subjects, and pursuing every design which could conduce to their welfare. Marshes were drained, lands were broken up and cultivated, manufactures established, the finances were put in the best order, and agriculture, as the great staple of the kingdom, was sedulously encouraged. His capital was embellished, and the fame of his exploits attracted the greatest and most celebrated men in Europe. Voltaire, among the rest, became for years his guest ; but the aspiring genius and irascible temper of the military monarch could ill accord with the vanity and insatiable thirst for praise of the French author, and they parted with mutual respect but irretrievable alienation. Meanwhile, the strength of the monarchy was daily increasing under Frederick's wise and provident administration. The population nearly reached six million of souls ; the cavalry mustered thirty thousand, all in the highest state of discipline and equipment ; and the infantry, esteemed with reason the most perfect in Europe, numbered a hundred and twenty thousand bayonets.

37.
His great
services to
his kingdom
during the
next ten
years of
peace.

These troops had long been accustomed to act together in large bodies—the best training, next to actual service in the field, which an army can receive. They had need of all their skill, discipline, and courage ; for Prussia was ere long threatened by the most formidable confederacy that ever yet had been directed in modern

38.
Coalition of
Austria,
Russia,
France,
Saxony, and
Sweden
against
Prussia.

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1714.

times against a single state. Austria, Russia, France, Sweden, and Saxony, united in alliance for the purpose of partitioning the Prussian territories. These allies had ninety millions of men in their dominions, and could with ease bring four hundred thousand men into the field. Prussia had less than six millions of inhabitants, who were strained to the uttermost to array a hundred and twenty thousand combatants; and, even with the aid of England and Hanover, not more than fifty thousand auxiliaries could be relied on. Prussia had neither strong fortresses like Flanders, nor mountain chains like Spain, nor a frontier stream like France. Its territory, open on every side, was entirely composed of flat plains, unprotected by great rivers, and surrounded on the south, east, and north by its enemies. The contest seemed utterly desperate, and there did not seem a chance of escape for the Prussian monarchy.

39.
Frederick
invades
Saxony, and
conquers
that coun-
try.

Frederick began the contest by one of those strokes which demonstrated the strength of his understanding and the vigour of his determination. Instead of waiting to be attacked, he carried the war at once into the enemy's territories, and converted the resources of the nearest of them to his own advantage. Having received authentic intelligence of the signature of a treaty for the partition of his kingdom by the great powers, on 9th May, 1756, he suddenly entered the Saxon territories, made himself master of Dresden, and shut up the whole forces of Saxony in the intrenched camp at Pirna. Marshal Brown having advanced at the head of sixty thousand men to relieve them, he encountered and totally defeated him at Lowositz, with the loss of fifteen thousand men. Deprived of all hope of succour, the Saxons in Pirna, after having made vain efforts to

escape, were obliged to lay down their arms, still fourteen thousand strong. The whole of Saxony submitted to the victor, who thenceforward, during the whole war, turned its entire resources to his own support.

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1714.

Beyond all question, it was this masterly and successful stroke, in the very outset, and in the teeth of his enemies, which added above a third to his warlike resources, and enabled him subsequently to maintain his ground against the desperate odds by which he was assailed. Most of the Saxons taken at Pirna, dazzled by the conqueror's fame, entered his service: the Saxon youth hastened in crowds to enrol themselves under the banners of the hero of the North of Germany. Frederick, at the same time, effectually vindicated the step he had taken in the eyes of all Europe, by the publication of the secret treaty of partition, which he had discovered in the archives at Dresden, in spite of the efforts of the Electress to conceal it. Whatever might have been the case in the former war, when he seized on Silesia, it was apparent to the world that he now, at least, was strictly in the right, and that his invasion of Saxony was not less justifiable on the score of public morality, than important in its consequences to the great contest in which he was engaged.

40.
Great
effects of
this stroke.

The Allies made the utmost efforts to regain the advantages they had lost. France, instead of the twenty-four thousand men she was bound to furnish by the treaty of partition, put a hundred thousand on foot; the Diet of Ratisbon placed sixty thousand troops of the Empire at the disposal of Austria; but Frederick still preserved the ascendant. Breaking into Bohemia, in March 1757, he defeated the Austrians in a great battle under the walls of Prague, shut up forty thousand of their

41.
He defeats
the Aus-
trians at
Prague, and
is defeated
at Kolin.

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1714.

best troops in that town, and soon reduced them to such extremities that it was evident that, if not succoured, they must surrender. The cabinet of Vienna made the greatest efforts for their relief. Marshal Daun, whose cautious and scientific policy was peculiarly calculated to thwart the designs and baffle the audacity of his youthful antagonist, advanced at the head of sixty thousand men to their relief. Frederick advanced to meet them with less than twenty thousand combatants. He attacked the Imperialists in a strong position at Kolin, on the 18th July, and, for the first time in his life, met with a bloody defeat. His army, especially that division commanded by his brother, the prince-royal, sustained severe losses in the retreat, which became unavoidable, out of Bohemia ; and the king confessed in his private correspondence that an honourable death alone remained to him.

42.
Desperate
situation of
the Prussian
monarchy.

Disaster accumulated on every side. The English and Hanoverian army, his only allies, capitulated at Closterseven, and left the French army, sixty thousand strong, at liberty to follow the Prussians ; the French and the troops of the Empire, with the Duke of Richelieu at their head, menaced Magdeburg, where the royal family of Prussia had taken refuge, and advanced towards Dresden. The Russians, seventy thousand strong, were making serious progress on the side of Poland, and had recently defeated the Prussians opposed to them. The king was put to the ban of the Empire ; and the army of the Empire, mustering forty thousand, was moving against him. Four huge armies, each stronger than his own, were advancing to crush a prince who could not collect thirty thousand men round his banners. At that period he carried a sure poison always with him, deter-

mined not to fall alive into the hands of his enemies. He seriously contemplated suicide, and gave vent to the mournful but yet heroic sentiments with which he was inspired, in a letter to Voltaire, terminating with the lines—

“ Pour moi, menacé de naufrage,
Je dois, en affrontant l’orage,
Penser, vivre, et mourir en roi.”

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1714.

Then it was that the astonishing vigour and powers of his mind shone forth with their full lustre. Collecting hastily twenty-five thousand men out of his shattered battalions, he marched against the Prince of Soubise, who, at the head of an army of sixty thousand French and Imperial troops, was advancing against him through Thuringia, and totally defeated him, with the loss of eighteen thousand men, on the memorable field of Rosbach. Hardly was this triumph achieved when he was called, with his indefatigable followers, to stem the advance of the Prince of Lorraine and Marshal Daun, who were making the most alarming progress in Silesia. Schweidnitz, its capital, had fallen ; a large body of Prussians, under the Duke de Bevern, had been defeated at Breslau. That rich and important province seemed on the point of falling again into the hands of the Austrians, when Frederick reinstated his affairs, which seemed wholly desperate, by one of those astonishing strokes which distinguish him, perhaps, above any general of modern times. In the depth of winter he attacked, at Leuthen, on the 5th December 1757, Marshal Daun and the Prince of Lorraine—who had sixty thousand admirable troops under their orders—and, by the skilful application of the *oblique* method of attack, defeated them entirely, with the loss of thirty thousand men, of

43.
Frederick's
marvellous
victories at
Rosbach
and Leu-
then.

CHAP.
XII.
1714.

whom eighteen thousand were prisoners ! It was the greatest victory that had been gained in Europe since the battle of Blenheim. Its effects were immense : the Austrians were driven headlong out of Silesia ; Schweidnitz was regained ; the King of Prussia, pursuing them, carried the war into Moravia, and laid siege to Olmutz ; and England, awakened at the voice of Chatham from its unworthy slumber, refused to ratify the capitulation of Closterseven, resumed the war on the Continent with more vigour than ever, and intrusted its direction to Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who soon rivalled Turenne in the skill and science of his methodical warfare.

44.
Disasters
sustained by
his troops
in other
quarters,
and victory
of Zorndorf.

But it was the destiny of the King of Prussia—a destiny which displayed his great qualities in their full lustre—to be perpetually involved in difficulties, from the enormous numerical preponderance of his enemies, or the misfortunes of the lieutenants to whom his subordinate armies were intrusted. Frederick could not be personally present everywhere at the same time ; and wherever he was absent, disaster revealed the overwhelming superiority of the force by which he was assailed. The siege of Olmutz, commenced in March 1758, proved unfortunate. The battering train at the disposal of the king was unequal to its reduction, and it became necessary to raise the siege on the approach of Daun with a formidable Austrian army. During this unsuccessful irruption into the south, the Russians had been making alarming progress in the north-east, where the feeble force opposed to them was wellnigh overwhelmed by their enormous superiority of numbers. Frederick led back the flower of his army from Olmutz to Moravia, crossed all Silesia and Prussia, and encountered the

sturdy barbarians at Zorndorf, defeating them with the loss of seventeen thousand men—an advantage which delivered the eastern provinces of the monarchy from this formidable invasion. This victory was dearly purchased, however, by the sacrifice of ten thousand of his own best soldiers.

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1714.

But, during the king's absence, Prince Henry of Prussia, whom he had left in command of sixteen thousand men, to keep Marshal Daun in check, was wellnigh overwhelmed by that able commander, who was again at the head of an army of fifty thousand. Frederick fled back to his support, and, having joined his brother, took post at Hohenkirchen. The position was unfavourable; the army inferior to the enemy. "If Daun does not attack us here," said Marshal Keith, "he deserves to be hanged." "I hope," answered Frederick, "he will be more afraid of us than the rope." The Austrian veteran, however, saw his advantage, and attacked the Prussians during the night with such skill that he threw them into momentary confusion, took one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, and drove them from their ground, with the loss of seven thousand men. Nothing, however, could subdue the vigour or exhaust the resources of Frederick. Though grievously wounded in the conflict, and after having seen his best generals fall around him, he rallied his troops at daybreak, formed them in good order behind the village which had been surprised, and led them leisurely to a position a mile from the field of conflict, where he offered battle to the enemy, who did not venture to accept it. Having remained two days in this position, to reorganise his troops, he decamped, raised the siege of Neiss, and succeeded in taking up his winter-quarters at Breslau,

45.
Frederick's
defeat at
Hohenkir-
chen.

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XII.

1714.

46.

Terrible
battle of
Cunners-
dorf, in
which Fre-
derick is
defeated.

in the very middle of the province he had wrested from the enemy.

The campaign of 1759 was still more perilous to Frederick ; but, if possible, it displayed his extraordinary talents in still brighter colours. He began by observing the Austrians, under Daun and the Prince of Lorraine, in Silesia, and reserved his strength to combat the Russians, who were advancing, eighty thousand strong, through East Prussia. Frederick attacked them at Cunnersdorf, with forty thousand only, in an intrenched position, guarded by two hundred pieces of cannon. The first onset of the Prussians was entirely successful : they forced the front line of the Russian intrenchment, and took seventy-two guns. The victory seemed gained : he wrote to Berlin that they might soon expect to hear of a glorious triumph. But the situation of the king was such, pressed on all sides by superior armies, that he could not stop short with ordinary success ; and, in the attempt to gain a decisive victory, he had wellnigh lost all. The heroism of his troops was shattered against the strength of the second line of the Russians ; a large body of Austrians came up to their support during the battle, and after having exhausted all the resources of courage and genius, he was driven from the field with the loss of twenty thousand men and all his artillery.

47.

Overwhelm-
ing misfor-
tunes in
other quar-
ters.

The Russians lost eighteen thousand men in this terrible battle, the most bloody which had been fought for centuries in Europe, and were in no condition to follow up their victory. Other misfortunes, however, in appearance overwhelming, succeeded each other. General Schmettan capitulated in Dresden ; and General Finch, with seventeen thousand men, was obliged to lay

down his arms in the defiles of the Bohemian mountains. All seemed lost ; but the king still persevered, and the victory of Minden enabled Prince Ferdinand to detach twelve thousand men to his support. The Prussians nobly stood by their heroic sovereign in the hour of trial—new levies supplied the wide chasms in his ranks. Frederick's great skill averted all future disasters ; and the campaign of 1759, the *fourth* of the war, concluded with the king still in possession of all his dominions in the midst of the enormous forces of his enemies.

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1714.

The campaign of 1760 began in March by another disaster at Landshut, where ten thousand Prussians were cut to pieces under one of his generals, and the important fortress of Glatz was invested by the Austrians. Frederick advanced to relieve it, but soon remeasured his steps to attempt the siege of Dresden. Daun, in his turn, followed him, and obliged the Prussian monarch to raise the siege. Frederick then resumed his march into Silesia, closely followed by three armies, each more numerous than his own, under Laudon, Daun, and Lacey, without their being able to obtain the slightest advantage over him. Laudon, the most active of them, attempted to surprise him ; but Frederick was aware of his design, and received the attacking columns at Liegnitz in so masterly a manner that they were totally defeated, with the loss of twelve thousand men.

48.

Victory of
Frederick
over Lau-
don at Lieg-
nitz.

Scarcely had he achieved this victory when he had to make head against Lacey, withstand Daun, repel an enormous body of Russians, who were advancing through East Prussia, and deliver Berlin, which had been a second time occupied by his enemies. Driven to desperate measures by such an unparalleled succession of dangers, he extricated himself from them by the

49.

Dreadful
battle, and
victory of
the Prus-
sians at
Torgau.

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terrible battle and extraordinary victory of Torgau, on November 3, 1761, in which, after a dreadful struggle, he defeated Daun, though intrenched to the teeth, with the loss of twenty-five thousand men—an advantage dearly purchased by the loss of eighteen thousand of his own brave soldiers. But this victory saved the Prussian monarchy: Daun, severely wounded in the battle, retired to Vienna; his army withdrew into Bohemia; two-thirds of Saxony was regained by the Prussians; the Russians and Swedes retired; Berlin was delivered from the enemy; and the fifth campaign terminated with the unconquerable monarch still in possession of nearly his whole dominions.

50.
Desperate
state of
Prussia at
this time.

The military strength of Prussia was now all but exhausted by the unparalleled and heroic efforts she had made. Frederick has left us the following picture of the state of his kingdom and army at this disastrous period:—"Our condition at that period can only be likened to that of a man riddled with balls, weakened by the loss of blood, and ready to sink under the weight of his sufferings. The noblesse were exhausted, the lower people ruined; numbers of villages burnt, many towns destroyed; a complete anarchy had overturned the whole order and police of government; in a word, desolation was universal. The army was in no better situation. *Seventeen pitched battles* had mowed down the flower of the officers and soldiers; the regiments were broken down, and composed in part of deserters and prisoners; order had disappeared, and discipline relaxed to such a degree that the old infantry was little better than a body of newly-raised militia." Necessity not less than prudence, in these circumstances, which to any other man would have seemed desperate, prescribed a cautious defensive policy;¹ and it is doubtful whether

¹ Histoire
de mon
Temps, par
Frederick
IV., p. 174.

in it his greatness did not appear more conspicuous than in the bolder parts of his former career.

The campaign of 1761 passed in skilful marches and countermarches, without his numerous enemies being able to obtain a single advantage, where the king commanded in person. He was now, literally speaking, assailed on all sides : the immense masses of the Austrians and Russians were converging to one point ; and Frederick, who could not muster forty thousand men under his banners, found himself assailed by one hundred thousand allies, whom six campaigns had trained to perfection in the military art. It seemed impossible he could escape ; yet he did so, and compelled his enemies to retire without gaining the slightest advantage over him. Taking post in an intrenched camp at Bunzelwitz, fortified with the utmost skill, defended with the utmost vigilance, he succeeded in maintaining himself and providing food for his troops for two months within cannon-shot of the enormous masses of the Russians and Austrians, till want of provisions obliged them to separate. "It has just come to this," said Frederick, "who will starve first?" He made his enemies do so. Burning with shame, they were forced to retire to their respective territories, so that he was enabled to take up his winter-quarters at Breslau in Silesia. But, during this astonishing struggle, disaster had accumulated in other quarters. His camp at Bunzelwitz had only been maintained by concentrating in it nearly the whole strength of the monarchy, and its more distant provinces suffered severely under the drain. Schweidnitz, the capital of Silesia, was surprised by the Austrians, with its garrison of four thousand men. Prince Henry, after the loss of Dresden, had the utmost

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51.
Operations
in the camp
of Bunzel-
witz in
1761.

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difficulty in maintaining himself in the part of Saxony which still remained to the Prussians ; in Silesia they had lost all but Glogau, Breslau, and Neisse ; and to complete his misfortune, the dismissal of Lord Chatham from office in England had led to the stoppage of the wonted subsidy of £750,000 a-year. The resolution of the king did not sink, but his judgment almost despaired of success under such a complication of disasters. Determined not to yield, he discovered a conspiracy at his headquarters to seize him, and deliver him to his enemies. Dreading such a calamity more than death, he carried with him, as formerly in similar circumstances, a sure poison, intended, in the last extremity, to terminate his days.

52.
The death
of the Em-
press of
Russia re-
stores his
affairs.

“ Nevertheless,” as he himself said, “ affairs which seemed desperate, in reality were not so ; and perseverance at length surmounted every peril.” Fortune often, in real life, as well as in romance, favours the brave. In the case of Frederick, however, it would be unjust to say he was favoured by Fortune. On the contrary, she long proved adverse to him ; and he recovered her smiles only by heroically persevering till the ordinary chances of human affairs turned in his favour. He accomplished what in serious cases is the great aim of medicine—he made the patient survive the disease. In the winter of 1761, the Empress of Russia died, and was succeeded by Peter III. That prince had long conceived the most ardent admiration for Frederick, and he manifested it in the most decisive manner on his accession to the throne, by not only withdrawing from the alliance, but uniting his forces with those of Prussia against Austria. This great event speedily changed the face of affairs. The united Prussians and

Russians, under Frederick, seventy thousand strong, retook Schweidnitz in the face of Daun, who had only sixty thousand men ; and although the sudden death of the Czar Peter in a few months deprived him of the aid of his powerful neighbours, yet Russia took no further part in the contest. France, exhausted and defeated in every quarter of the globe by England, could render no aid to Austria, upon whom the whole weight of the contest fell. It was soon apparent that she was over-matched by the Prussian hero. Relieved from the load which had so long oppressed him, Frederick vigorously resumed the offensive. Silesia was wholly regained by the king in person ; the battle of Freyberg gave his brother, Prince Henry, the ascendant in Saxony ; and the cabinet of Vienna, seeing the contest hopeless, were glad to make peace at Hubertsburg, on 15th February 1763, on terms which, besides confirming to him Silesia, left entire the whole dominions of the King of Prussia.

He entered Berlin in triumph, after six years' absence, in an open chariot, with Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick seated by his side. No words can paint the enthusiasm of the spectators at the august spectacle, or the admiration with which they regarded the hero who had filled the world with his renown. It was no wonder they were proud of their sovereign. His like had never been seen since the fall of the Roman empire. He had founded and saved a kingdom. He had conquered Europe in arms. With six millions of subjects he had vanquished powers possessing ninety millions. He had created a new era in the art of war. His people were exhausted, pillaged, ruined ; their numbers had declined a tenth during the contest. But what then ? They had come victorious out of a struggle

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53.

Wonderful
result of the
struggle.

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unparalleled in modern times : the halo of Leuthen and Rosbach, of Zorndorf and Torgau, played round their bayonets ; they were inspired with the energy which so speedily repairs any disaster. Frederick wisely and magnanimously laid aside the sword when he resumed the pacific sceptre. His subsequent reign was almost entirely spent in tranquillity ; all the wounds of war were speedily healed under his sage and beneficent administration. Before his death, his subjects had been doubled, the national wealth had been made triple of what it had been at the commencement of his reign ; and Prussia now boasts of sixteen millions of inhabitants, and a population increasing faster in numbers and resources than that of any other state in Europe.

54.
His character as a general.

No laboured character, no studied eulogium, can paint Frederick like this brief and simple narrative of his exploits. It places him at once at the head of modern generals—if Hannibal be excepted, perhaps of ancient and modern. He was not uniformly successful : on the contrary, he sustained several dreadful defeats. But that arose from the enormous superiority of force by which he was assailed, and the desperate state of his affairs, which were generally so pressing that even a respite in one quarter could be obtained only by a victory instantly gained, under whatever circumstances, in another. What appears rashness was often in him the height of wisdom. He had no parliament or coalition to consider ; no adverse faction was on the watch to convert casual disaster into the means of ruin. He was at liberty to take counsel only from his own heroic breast. He could protract the struggle, however, by no other means but strong and vigorous strokes and the lustre of instant success, and they could not be dealt out without

the risk of receiving as many. The fact of his maintaining the struggle against such desperate odds proves the general wisdom of his policy. No man ever made more skilful use of an interior line of communication, or flew with greater rapidity from one threatened part of his dominions to another. None ever, by the force of skill in tactics and sagacity in strategy, gained such astonishing successes with forces so inferior. And if some generals have committed fewer faults, none were impelled by such desperate circumstances to a hazardous course; and none had ever greater magnanimity in confessing and explaining them for the benefit of future times.

The only general in modern times who can bear a comparison with Frederick, if the difficulties of his situation are considered, is Napoleon. It is a part only of his campaigns, however, which sustains the analogy. There is no resemblance between the mighty conqueror pouring down the valley of the Danube, at the head of one hundred and eighty thousand men, invading Russia with five hundred thousand, or overrunning Spain with three hundred thousand, and Frederick the Great, with thirty thousand or forty thousand, turning every way against quadruple the number of Austrians, French, Swedes, and Russians. Yet a part, and the most brilliant part, of Napoleon's career bears a close resemblance to that of the Prussian hero. In Lombardy in 1796, in Saxony in 1813, and in the plain of Champagne in 1814, he was upon the whole inferior in force to his opponents, and owed the superiority which he generally enjoyed, at the point of attack, to the rapidity of his movements, and the skill with which, like Frederick, he availed himself of an interior line of communication. His immortal campaign in France in 1814, in particular,

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55.
Comparison
of Frederick
and Napo-
leon.

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where he bore up with seventy thousand men against two hundred and fifty thousand enemies, bears the closest resemblance to those which Frederick sustained for six years against the forces of the coalition.

56.
Their points
of resem-
blance

Both were often to appearance rash, because the affairs of each were so desperate that nothing could save them but an audacious policy. Both were indomitable in resolution, and preferred ruin to sitting down on a dishonoured throne. Both were from the outset of the struggle placed in circumstances apparently hopeless, and each succeeded in protracting it solely by his astonishing talent and resolution. The fate of the two was widely different: the one transmitted an honoured and aggrandised throne to his successors; the other, overthrown and discrowned, terminated his days on the rock of St Helena. But success is not always the test of real merit: the verdict of ages is often different from the judgment or fate of present times. Hannibal conquered, has left a greater name among men than Scipio victorious. In depth of thought, force of genius, variety of information, and splendour of success, Frederick will bear no comparison with Napoleon. But Frederick's deeds, as a general, were more extraordinary than those of the French emperor, because he bore up longer against greater odds. It is the highest praise of Napoleon to say, that he did in one campaign—his last and greatest—what Frederick had continued to do for six.

57.
Of Marlbo-
rough and
Wellington.

If the campaigns of Eugene and Frederick suggest a comparison with those of Napoleon, those of Marlborough challenge a parallel with those of the other great commander of our day—Wellington. Their political and military situations were in many respects alike. Both combated at the head of the forces of a coalition,

composed of dissimilar nations, actuated by separate interests, inflamed by different passions. Both had the utmost difficulty in soothing the jealousies and stifling the selfishness of these nations ; and both found themselves often more seriously impeded by the allied cabinets in their rear, than by the enemy's forces in their front. Both were the generals of a nation which, albeit covetous of military glory, and proud of warlike renown, is to the last degree impatient of previous preparation ; which ever frets at the cost of wars that its political position renders unavoidable, or that in its ambitious spirit it had readily undertaken. Both were compelled to husband the blood of their soldiers, and spare the resources of their governments, from the consciousness that they had already been strained to the uttermost in the cause, and that any further demands would render the war so unpopular as speedily to lead to its termination. The career of both occurred at a time when political passions were strongly roused in their country ; when the war in which they were engaged was waged against the inclination, and, in appearance at least, against the interests, of a large and powerful party at home, who sympathised from political feeling with their enemies, and were ready to decry every success and magnify every disaster of their own arms, from a secret feeling that their party elevation was identified rather with the successes of the enemy than with those of their own countrymen. The Tories were to Marlborough precisely what the Whigs were to Wellington. Both were opposed to the armies of the most powerful monarch, led by the most renowned generals of Europe, whose forces, preponderating over those of the adjoining states, had come to threaten the liberties of all

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58.
Points in
which their
situations
differed.

Europe, and against whom there had at last been formed a general coalition, to restrain the ambition from which so much detriment had already been experienced.

But while in these respects the two British heroes were placed very much in the same circumstances, in other particulars, not less material, their situations were widely different. Marlborough had never any difficulties in the field to struggle with, approaching those which beset Wellington. By great exertions, both on his own part and that of the British and Dutch government, his force was generally almost equal to that with which he had to contend. It was often exactly so. War at that period, in the Low Countries at least, consisted chiefly of a single battle during a campaign, followed by the siege of two or three frontier fortresses. The number of strongholds with which the country bristled, rendered any further or more extensive operations, in general, impossible. This state of matters at once rendered success more probable to a general of superior abilities, and made it more easy to repair disaster. No vehement passions had been roused, bringing whole nations into the field, and giving one state, where they had burnt the fiercest, a vast superiority in point of numbers over its more pacific or less excited neighbours. But in all these respects, the circumstances in which Wellington was placed were not only not parallel, they were contrasted. From first to last, in the Peninsula, he was enormously outnumbered by the enemy. Until the campaign of 1813, when his force in the field was, for the first time, equal to that of the French, the superiority to which he was opposed was so prodigious that the only surprising thing is, how he was not driven into the sea at the very first encounter.

While the French had never less than two hundred thousand effective troops at their disposal, after providing for all their garrisons and communications, the English general had never more than thirty thousand effective British, and twenty thousand Portuguese, around his standard. The French were directed by the Emperor, who, intent on the subjugation of the Peninsula, and wielding the inexhaustible powers given by the conscription for the supply of his armies, cared not though he lost a hundred thousand men in every campaign, provided he purchased success by their sacrifice. Wellington was supported at home by a government which, raising its soldiers by voluntary enrolment, could with difficulty supply a drain of fifteen thousand men a-year from their ranks for service in every quarter of the globe. He was watched by a party which decried every advantage, and magnified every disaster, in order to induce the entire withdrawal of the troops from the Peninsula.

Napoleon sent into Spain a host of veterans trained in fifteen years' combats, who had carried the French standards into every capital of Europe. Wellington led to their encounter troops admirably disciplined, indeed, but almost all unacquainted with actual war, and having often to learn the rudiments even of the most necessary field operations in presence of the enemy. Marlborough's troops, though heterogeneous and dissimilar, had been trained to their practical duties in the preceding wars under William III., and brought into the field a degree of experience noways inferior to that of their opponents. Bolingbroke tells us that, from the very outset of his command, in the Wars of the Succession, Marlborough placed his main reliance on this circumstance. Whoever weighs with impartiality those different circum-

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59.

Great superiority of force with which Wellington had to contend.

60.

Opposite circumstances of the soldiers of Napoleon, Marlborough, and Wellington.

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61.
Their re-
spective
character-
istics.

stances, cannot avoid arriving at the conclusion, that, as Wellington's difficulties were incomparably more formidable than Marlborough's, so his merit in surmounting them was proportionally greater.

Though similar in many respects, so far as the general conduct of their campaigns is concerned, from the necessity under which both laboured of husbanding the blood of their soldiers, the military qualities of England's two chiefs were essentially different, and each possessed some points in which he was superior to the other. By nature Wellington was more daring than Marlborough, and though soon constrained by necessity to adopt a cautious system, he continued, throughout all his career, to incline more to a hazardous policy than his great predecessor. The intrepid advance and fight at Assaye, the crossing of the Douro and movement on Talavera in 1809, the advance to Madrid and Burgos in 1812, the actions before Bayonne in 1813, the desperate stand made at Waterloo in 1815—place this beyond a doubt. Marlborough never hazarded so much on the success of a single enterprise: he ever aimed at compassing his objects by skill and combination, rather than risking them on the chance of arms. Wellington was a mixture of Turenne and Eugene: Marlborough was the perfection of the Turenne school alone. No man could fight more ably and gallantly than Marlborough: his talent and rapidity of eye in tactics were at least equal to his skill in strategy and previous combination. But he was not partial to such desperate passages-at-arms, and never resorted to them but from necessity, or when encouraged by a happy opportunity for striking a blow. The proof of this is decisive. Marlborough, during ten campaigns, fought only five pitched battles. Wellington,

in seven, fought fifteen, in every one of which he proved victorious.*

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62.

Wellington's policy was more daring but more hazardous than Marlborough's.

Marlborough's consummate generalship, throughout his whole career, kept him out of disaster. It was said, with justice, that he never fought a battle which he did not gain, nor laid siege to a town which he did not take. He took above twenty fortified places of the first order, generally in presence of an enemy's army superior to his own. Wellington's more desperate circumstances frequently involved him in peril, and on some occasions caused serious losses to his army; but they were the price at which he purchased his transcendent successes. Wellington's bolder strategy gained for him advantages which the more circumspect measures of his predecessor never could have attained. Marlborough would never, with scarcely any artillery, have hazarded the attack on Burgos, nor incurred the perilous chances of the retreat from that town; but he never would have delivered the south of the Peninsula in a single campaign, by throwing himself, with forty thousand men, upon the communications, in the north, of a hundred and fifty thousand. It is hard to say which was the greatest general, if their merits in the field alone are considered; but Wellington's successes were the more vital to his country, for they delivered it from the greater peril; and they were more honourable to himself, for they were achieved against greater odds. And his fame in future times will be proportionally brighter; for the final overthrow of Napoleon, and the destruction of the Revolutionary power, in a single battle, present an object

* Viz: Vimiera, the Douro, Talavera, Busaco, Fuentes d'Onoro, Salamanca, Vitoria, the Pyrenees, the Bidassoa, the Nive, the Nivelle, Orthes, Toulouse, Quatre Bras, and Waterloo.

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63.
 Marlbo-
 rough made
 more use of
 cavalry than
 Wellington
 —and why.

of surpassing interest, to which there is nothing in history perhaps parallel, and which, to the latest generation, will fascinate the minds of men.

Marlborough laid great stress on cavalry in war ; his chief successes in the field were owing to the skilful use made of a powerful reserve body of horse in the decisive point, and at the decisive moment. It was thus that he overthrew the French centre at Blenheim, by the charge of six thousand cavalry headed by himself in person, in the interval between that village and Oberglau ; struck the decisive blow at Ramilies by the charge of a reserve of twenty squadrons drawn from the rear of the right ; and broke through the formidable intrenchments at Malplaquet, by instantly following up the irruption of Lord Orkney into the centre of the lines by a vigorous charge of thirty squadrons of cavalry in at the opening. The proportion of horse to infantry was much greater in his armies than it has since been in the British service ; it was never under eighty, and at last as high as a hundred and sixty squadrons, which, at the usual rate of a hundred and fifty to a squadron, must, when complete, have mustered twelve and twenty-four thousand sabres. This was from a fourth to a fifth of their amount at each time. His horse, in great part composed of the steady German dragoons, was in general of the very best description. Wellington's victories were, for the most part, less owing to the action of cavalry ; but that was because the country which was the theatre of war —Portugal, Spain, and the south of France—was commonly too rocky or mountainous to admit of the use of horse on an extended scale, and he had not nearly so large a body of cavalry at his disposal. Where they could be rendered available, he made the best use of

this powerful arm, as was shown in Le Marchant's noble charge at Salamanca, Bock's with the heavy Germans next day, and Ponsonby's, Vivian's, and Somerset's at Waterloo.

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In recent times, and especially since the campaigns of Frederick the Great, the importance of cavalry has been too much underrated by military men. Napoleon had the highest opinion of the value of that arm in war ; he constantly said, that, if the courage and leading on both sides were equal, horse should break the steadiest infantry. Almost all his great victories—Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Borodino, Dresden, Montmirail, Vau-champs—were owing to the terrible charge at the close of the day by Murat, or his successors, with his immense body of heavy horse. This vehemence all but reft the day from the British at Waterloo : opposed by any other infantry, it unquestionably would have done so. Hannibal's victories were all gained by his Numidian cavalry : the sight of the uniform of two or three of them was sufficient after Cannæ to make a whole Roman legion stand to arms. This is adverse to the general doctrine of military men at this period ; but there are phases in opinion on war as in other things : what is commonly thought at a particular time is not always right. The recent victories of Aliwal and Sobraon in India have gone far to shake the validity of the more current opinion ; and if authority is to decide the matter, he is a bold man who gainsays the united judgment of Hannibal, Marlborough, and Napoleon.

64.
Napoleon's
and Hanni-
bal's opinion
of cavalry.

Marlborough was more fortunate than Wellington, perhaps more so than any general of modern times, in sieges. He took nearly all the strongest places in Europe in presence of an enemy's army, always equal,

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65.

Marlbo-
rough was
more suc-
cessful than
Wellington
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generally superior to his own : he never once laid siege to a fortress that he did not subdue. His reduction of Lille, with its noble garrison of fifteen thousand men, in presence of Vendôme at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand, was the most wonderful achievement of the kind which modern Europe had witnessed. Wellington was less fortunate in this branch of warfare. He made three successful sieges, those of Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, and San Sebastian ; but he sustained three bloody repulses, at Badajoz in 1811, Burgos in 1812, and San Sebastian in the first siege in 1813. But in justice to Wellington, the essential difference between his situation and that of Marlborough in this respect must be considered. The latter carried on the war in Flanders close to the strongholds of Austria and Holland, at no great distance from the arsenals of England, and with the facilities of water-carriage in general for bringing up his battering-trains. His troops, trained by experience in the long war which terminated with the peace of Ryswick, in 1697, had become as expert as their enemies in all the branches of the military art.

66.

Causes of
this circum-
stance.

Wellington carried on the war at a great distance from the resources of Great Britain, with little aid from the inefficient or distracted councils of Portugal or Spain, in a mountainous country, where water-communication could only penetrate a short way into the interior, in presence of an enemy's force always double, often triple, his own, and with troops whom a century of domestic peace, bought by Marlborough's victories, had caused so completely to forget the practical details of war, that even some of the best of the general officers, when they embarked for the Peninsula, had to be told what a

ravelin and a counterscarp were.* He was compelled by the pressure of time, and the approach of forces greatly superior to his own, to make assaults as his last chance, when the breaches were scarcely practicable, and the parapets and defences around them had not even been knocked away. The attacks on Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were not regular sieges; they were sudden assaults on strong places by a sort of *coup-de-main*, under circumstances where methodical approaches were impossible. Whoever weighs these circumstances, so far from wondering at the chequered fortune of Wellington in sieges, will rather be surprised that he was successful at all.

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The examination of the comparative merits of these two illustrious generals, and the enumeration of the names of their glorious triumphs, suggests one reflection of a very peculiar kind. That England is a maritime power, that the spirit of her inhabitants is essentially nautical, and that the sea is the element on which her power has chiefly been developed, need be told to none who reflect on the magnitude of her present colonial empire, and how long she has wielded the empire of the waves. The French are the first to tell us that her strength is confined to that element; that she is, at land, only a third-rate power; and that the military career does not suit the genius of her people. How, then, has it happened that England, the nautical power, and little inured to land operations, has inflicted greater wounds upon France by *military* success, than any other

67.
Great and
remarkable
land tri-
umphs of
England
over France.

* This was literally true of the generals of infantry. Picton, whose gallant assault won the castle of Badajoz, and closed its terrible siege, spent some days with a celebrated officer, still alive, whose knowledge of fortification and gunnery is well known, in learning the rudiments of fortification and the attack of places.

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power, and that in almost all the pitched battles which the two nations have fought, during five centuries, the English have proved victorious? That England's military force is absorbed in the defence of a colonial empire which encircles the earth, is indeed certain; and, in every age, the impatience of taxation in her people has starved down her military establishment, during peace, to so low a point, as rendered the occurrence of disaster, in the first years subsequent to the breaking out of war, a matter of certainty. On the other hand, the military spirit of her neighbours has almost constantly kept theirs at the level which insures early success. Yet with all these disadvantages, and with a population which, down to the close of the last war, was little more than half that of France, she has inflicted far greater *land* disasters on her redoubtable neighbour than all the military monarchies of Europe put together.

68.
Long series
of land dis-
asters sus-
tained by
France from
England.

English armies, for a hundred and twenty years, ravaged France; while England has not seen the fires of a French camp since the battle of Hastings. English troops have twice taken the French capital; an English king was crowned at Paris; a French king rode captive through London; a French emperor died in English captivity, and his remains were surrendered by English generosity. Twice the English horse marched from Calais to the Pyrenees; once from the Pyrenees to Calais; the monuments of Napoleon in the French capital at this moment owe their preservation from German revenge to an English general. All the great disasters and days of mourning for France, since the battle of Hastings—Tenchey, Cressy, Poitiers, Azincour, Verneuil, Crevant, Blenheim, Oudenarde, Ramillies, Malplaquet, Minden, Dettingen, Quebec, Egypt, Talavera,

Salamanca, Vitoria, the Pyrenees, Orthes, Waterloo—were gained by English generals, and won, for the most part, by English soldiers. Even at Fontenoy, the greatest victory over England of which France can boast since Hastings, every regiment in the French army was, on their own admission, routed by the terrible English column, and victory was snatched from its grasp solely by want of support on the part of the Dutch and Austrians.* No coalition against France has ever been successful, in which England did not take a prominent part; none, in the end, has failed of gaining its objects, in which she stood foremost in the fight. This fact is so apparent on the most superficial survey of history that it is admitted by the ablest French historians, though they profess themselves unable to explain it.¹

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¹ Michelet's
Hist. de
France, v.
321.

Is it that there is a degree of hardihood and courage in the Anglo-Saxon race, which renders them, without

* "Les Anglais et les Hollandais attaquèrent en même temps sur deux points différentes. Les Anglais s'avancèrent sans que rien étonnat leur audace. Comme le terrain se resserrait, leurs bataillons furent obligés de se rapprocher, et ainsi se forma naturellement cette redoutable colonne, dont le Duc de Cumberland apprécia toute la puissance. En effet, elle marchait en lançant la mort de toutes ses faces. Rien ne pouvait entamer cette terrible masse. Les régiments Français venaient inutilement : se heurter contre elle et périr. Le premier corps abordé par les Anglais fut le régiment des Gardes Françaises. Avant que le feu commençât, un officier Anglais sort des rangs, ôte son chapeau, et dit, 'Messieurs les Français, tirez !' Un officier s'avance aussitôt, et répond, 'Les Français ne tirent pas les premiers : nous reponderons.' Les Anglais font feu, et avec tant de précision que toute la première ligne des Gardes tombat. Cette courtoisie intempestive couta la vie à dix-huit officiers. Cependant la colonne avançait toujours lentement, mais avec une inébranlable fermeté. Elle avait dépassé de trois cents toises le front de l'armée Française. La bataille paraissait perdue, et les personnes qui entouraient le roi parlaient déjà de la nécessité de la retraite. La Maréchal de Saxe, qu'on avait vu toujours au milieu du feu, soit en litière soit à cheval, accourt et s'écrie, 'Quel est le — qui donne ce conseil à votre Majesté ? Avant le combat c'était mon avis ; il est trop tard maintenant.' Tout était perdu si le roi eut quitté le champ de bataille."—DE TOCQUEVILLE, *Histoire de Louis XV.*, 525-526.

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69.

What have
been the
causes of
this ?

the benefit of previous experience in war, adequate to the conquest, on land, even of the most warlike Continental military nations ? Is it that the quality of dogged resolution, determination not to be conquered,—*bottom*, in the familiar English phrase,—is of such value in war that it compensates almost any degree of inferiority in the practical acquaintance with war ? Is it that the North brings forth a bolder race of men than the South, and that, other things being equal, the people nursed under a more rigorous climate will vanquish those of a more genial ? Is it that the free spirit which, in every age, has distinguished the English people, has communicated a degree of vigour and resolution to their warlike operations, which has rendered them so often victorious in land fights, albeit nautical and commercial in their ideas, over their military neighbours ? Or is it that this courage in war, and this vigour in peace, and this passion for freedom at all times, arise from, and are but symptoms of, an ardent and aspiring disposition, imprinted by Nature on the race to whom the dominion of half the globe has been destined ? Experience has not yet determined to which of these causes this most extraordinary fact has been owing ; but it is one upon which our military neighbours, and especially the French, would do well to ponder, now that the population of the British Isles has turned eight-and-twenty millions. If England has done such things in Continental warfare, with an army which never brought fifty thousand native British sabres and bayonets into the field, what would be the result if national distress, or necessities, or a change in the objects of national desire, were to send two hundred thousand ?

It is observed by the very eminent historian whose

labours have thrown such an imperishable light on the history of Scotland,* that "historic truth is a plant of the slowest growth: it generally takes several ages for its development; and when it does reach maturity, it is chiefly from the influence of the light of contemporary letters." Never was the justice of this remark more clearly evinced than in the history of the illustrious hero whose biography has now been brought to a close. More perhaps than any other man, Marlborough was the architect of the marvellous edifice of England's greatness; for he at once established on a solid basis the Protestant succession, which secured its religious freedom, and vanquished the formidable enemy which threatened its national independence. His mighty arm bequeathed to his country the honours and the happiness of the eighteenth century: the happiest period, by the admission of all historians, which has dawned upon the world since that of the Antonines in ancient story.

He laid the foundation—in preserving and raising its place among the nations, and securing the freedom which vivified its exertions—of the colonial empire which is destined to spread its descendants over half the globe. Nelson and Wellington themselves were less instrumental in producing its greatness. They upheld—but he created. Yet was this mighty genius and noble character the object of unmeasured obloquy in the generation which he had illustrated, and among the people whom he had saved. If there is any contrast more striking than another, it is between Marlborough as drawn by the party writers of the day, and Marlborough as now revealed by the impartial record of his actions, and the unerring testimony of his confidential correspondence.

CHAP.

XII.

1714.

70.

Value of
contempo-
rary corre-
spondence
in establish-
ing historic
truth.

71.

Its vast
effect on
Marlbo-
rough's
memory.

* Mr Tytler.

CHAP.
XII.

1714.

It is the fate of all men, in a world so largely influenced by passion and selfishness, who have made a great and lasting impression on human affairs, to be for a season borne down by such calumnies. Marlborough only underwent the fate which had been undergone by Cæsar, and was reserved for Napoleon. If the preceding pages shall contribute in any degree to aid in the illustration of so great a character, and to shed the light of historic truth on the actions of one of the most illustrious men whom the world has ever produced, the author's labours will not have been incurred in vain.

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